Environmental education and the non-governmental organisation: a case study of the wildlife trusts

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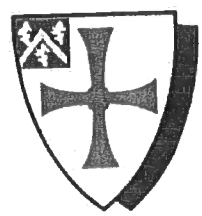

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A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy to the
University of Durham
School of Education
February 2003

One Volume

Declaration

No part of this thesis has been submitted previously for a degree at this or any other university.

Research for the Review of The Wildlife Trusts' Education was joint research (with J.A. Palmer) reported in the Final Report of this review. Where appropriate, this is referred to in this thesis. The research undertaken for the purpose of this PhD is entirely original, whilst set in the context of the education review.

Acknowledgements

This research has been completed with the support of many people. I owe special thanks to:

Joy for her advice, patience and encouragement whilst supervising this study. Thank you Joy for introducing me to Cleo's big skies of Northumberland, the poppy field and the trees on the hill;

Brian, for being the inspirational geographer and educator who gave me confidence during the early days;

The many people working and volunteering for The Wildlife Trusts who spent time talking to me and making this research possible;

Durham County Council – Maggie and Ed – for putting me in touch with members of the Agenda 21 Community Action Forum;

Jennifer and Chris for their assistance and guidance with diagrams and figures;

Staff and students I have worked with, my friends and those in Hatfield College (thank you Rach) and especially Theo who has kept me laughing;

The original Old One, for keeping me in one piece;

My parents, whose faith in me has meant everything. I think this is what happens after many sunrises, stargazes and adventures at sea. Mom and Dad – I am grateful for your ever-listening ears and proofreading eyes;

Nigel, thank you for your IT wizardry and attention to detail, for marrying me at the crazy time of completing this work and for your love and serenity.

Personal note: Readers will observe that the Final Report (Palmer and Lancaster 1999) of The Wildlife Trusts' Review is in the names of J.A.Palmer and J.C.Lancaster, the latter being the maiden name of the author of this thesis.

Abstract

Environmental Education and the Non-Governmental Organisation – A Case Study of The Wildlife Trusts

Joanna C. Birch 2003

This thesis describes and discusses an investigation into the education provision of The Wildlife Trusts as a UK environmental non-governmental organisation (NGO), comprising 47 local Trusts. Prior to this study, The Wildlife Trusts organisation had not been examined as a whole partnership, as an NGO or as a provider of environmental education. Research questions focus upon what The Wildlife Trusts does as an organisation in terms of providing environmental education and the associated limits and potentials. Specific areas of investigation are The Wildlife Trusts' educational activities, its strengths and weaknesses and its educational culture. Such enquiry is valuable for The Wildlife Trusts itself, other NGOs, environmental educators and indeed all concerned with environmental education provision.

The empirical work was conducted as a research-based case study and derives and builds upon research done for a commissioned review of The Wildlife Trusts' education provision. The thesis is influenced by Grounded Theory and draws predominantly on qualitative, but also quantitative techniques for data analysis and presentation. Interviews with Wildlife Trust personnel provided the primary source of data, supported by questionnaires, documentation obtained from Trusts and the author's personal field notes.

It is concluded that The Wildlife Trusts deliver numerous and diverse educational activities, yet neither as a unified NGO nor in sufficient partnership with other NGOs. The Wildlife Trusts is well placed to tailor activities effectively to local community audiences. It is recommended that The Wildlife Trusts overcome internally held negative attitudes towards 'education' through strengthening internal communications and developing a broader concept of 'people work'. It is argued that The Wildlife Trusts NGO has the potential to provide environmental education for all ages in both formal and informal education settings, in particular by providing outdoor and affective experiences on Trusts' reserves.

Contents

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Acronyms

BAP	Biodiversity Action Plan
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
BBONT	Berkshire Buckinghamshire Oxfordshire Nature Trust
BTCV	British Trust for Conservation Volunteers
CADISPA	Conservation And Development in Sparsely Populated Areas
CAP	Common Agricultural Policy
CART	Conservation Amenity and Recreation Trusts
CEE	Council for Environmental Education
CND	Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament
CoEnCo	Council for Environmental Conservation
CPRE	Council for the Protection of Rural England
DfEE	Department for Education and Employment
DES	Department for Education and Skills
DETR	Department for Environment Transport and the Regions
DEFRA	Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs
DoE	Department of the Environment
EC	European Commission
ECY	European Conservation Year
EEB	European Environmental Bureau
FE	Further Education
FOE	Friends of the Earth
GCSE	General Certificate of Secondary Education
GLOBE	Global Learning and Observation to Benefit the Environment
HE	Higher Education
HMI	Her Majesty's Inspectorate
IEEP	International Environmental Education Programme
IEP	Institute for Educational Policy
INSET	In-Service Training
IUCN	International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (World Conservation Union)
JNCC	Joint Nature Conservation Committee
LA	Local Authority
LEI	Local Environment Initiative
MORI	Market and Opinion Research International
MP	Member of Parliament
NAEE	National Association of Environmental Education
NAFSCO	National Association for Field Studies Centre Officers
NC	National Curriculum
NCC	Nature Conservancy Council
NCC	National Curriculum Council
NERC	Natural Environment Research Council
NFER	National Foundation for Environmental Research
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NNR	National Nature Reserves
NRA	National Rivers Authority
NRIC	Nature Reserves Investigation Committee
NT	National Trust
NVQ	National Vocational Qualification
OFSTED	Office for Standards in Education
PED	Pro-Environmental Disposition

PR	Public Relations
QAA	Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education
QCA	Qualifications and Curriculum Authority
RACE	Rapid Assessment for Conservation Education
RSNC	Royal Society for Nature Conservation
RSPB	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
SCAA	Schools Curriculum and Assessment Authority
SNC	Society for Nature Conservation
SPNR	Society for the Promotion of Nature Reserves
SRB	Single Regeneration Budget
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest
UN	United Nations
UNCED	United Nations Conference on Environment and Development
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation
WCED	World Commission on Environment and Development
WCS	World Conservation Strategy
WEA	Workers Educational Association
WES	Watch Education Service
WI	Women's Institute
WISE	World Information Service on Energy
WT	Wildlife Trusts
WWF	Worldwide Fund for Nature (previously World Wildlife Fund)
YOC	Young Ornithologists Club

Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Inspiration, aims and implications

In August 1998, the author of this thesis was appointed to act as research assistant for a commissioned review of education carried out for the UK environmental organisation known as The Wildlife Trusts. As work progressed on The Wildlife Trusts' education review, it quickly became clear that the research subject and the data generated would provide suitable material for doctoral work in the form of a case study. The material was to provide more than enough inspiration for the review's research assistant to devise research questions relating to The Wildlife Trusts' educational provision that would form the basis of study for this PhD thesis.

The Wildlife Trusts is a UK charity devoted to wildlife. It publicises itself as a group that campaigns for wildlife protection, collects wildlife data, manages wildlife habitats and raises people's awareness about the wildlife issues in both urban and rural areas. The Wildlife Trusts is an unusual environmental organisation in that it is made up of a partnership of 47 local Trusts distributed throughout the UK. The partnership is assisted by The Royal Society for Nature Conservation that acts as a central coordinating body administering grants and coordinating the strategic activities of The Wildlife Trusts (RSNC 2003). Together, the local Trusts in partnership manage over 2500 nature reserves that include a wide variety of habitats and species. The Wildlife Trusts organisation has almost 25 000 regular volunteers, over 413 000 members and a junior club called Wildlife Watch (The Wildlife Trusts 2003).

The Wildlife Trusts organisation presented its own reasons for requesting an education review. It wished for independent research to appraise all aspects of its educational activities for the period September 1998 – July 1999 and it called for assistance in developing a plan to guide work in this field for the next ten years. The full terms of reference for the commissioned review are presented in the Methodology section 5.2.1 along with reasons why the author chose different research questions for pursuing in this thesis from those of the commissioned review. In particular, the author pursued different aims from the review in order to ensure the originality of this thesis' investigations. The need to accomplish an original and thorough study beyond the initial review, alongside presentation of key aspects of this review, explains the magnitude and complexity of this thesis. That said, it is inevitable that within the pages that follow, and in particular the chapters on methodology, presentation of findings and discussion of outcomes, there is some overlap between and intertwining of material derived from the commissioned review and its Final Report (Palmer and Lancaster 1999) and the additional work undertaken for this thesis. Every effort has been made to attribute those aspects relating to the review where appropriate; thereby setting the substantial additional work in the context of its origins.

The author has read and reviewed a substantial quantity of literature that crosses disciplinary boundaries of conservation, education, politics, marketing and psychology. This reading was combined with experiences in data collection for the review to inspire the author to pursue the following questions for this thesis:

(1) **What does The Wildlife Trusts, as a UK environmental non-governmental organisation or NGO, do in its delivery of education?**

(2) **What *can* The Wildlife Trusts do in its delivery of environmental education, that is to say what are its limits and potentials?**

In order to answer these two questions, the empirical research set out to investigate three aspects of the Trusts' work:

(i) The educational activities of The Wildlife Trusts (for the data collection period of September 1998 to July 1999)
(ii) The strengths and weaknesses of The Wildlife Trusts' educational provision
(iii) The educational culture within The Wildlife Trusts.

These research questions were chosen partly because the commissioned education review data illuminated aspects of their answers. Also, the questions were chosen because the author found that the no other study or body of literature had previously addressed them.

A fundamental reason for engaging with these questions lies in the author's personal view of environmental education: it is seen as both valuable and necessary. Accounts of the harm that human beings inflict upon the planet - wildlife, plants, humans and their habitats – are well documented elsewhere. This work is written from the perspective of believing in both the intrinsic worth and beauty of wildlife and also the power of people. People with environmental awareness who know how to take action can slow down negative processes and create among others an appreciation and care for the environment. Thoughts from two of the education staff interviewed for this study sum up their own concerns for the environment and match the author's perspective very simply but perfectly:

> Well, I suppose – it's recognition of the fact that wildlife is disappearing and areas of habitat and actual species. I just have the feeling that it is something worth saving.

> ...from personal experience, there is something about being around nature and wildlife and I felt it very strongly. It's not a kind of evangelical experience but it just makes you feel a bit better because I think it reminds you of worlds outside your own little one ... in some way I think I am helping people to have a slightly better quality of life.

Beyond the more personal and self-indulgent interest, there are more practical rationales for this study. The author wished to understand The Wildlife Trusts as a non-governmental organisation (NGO) as well as ascertain what it is to be an environmental NGO. At this point it might be expected that a definition of 'NGO' should be presented, but since Chapter 3's literature review undertakes to explore the quite nebulous concepts and roles of the NGO, it is inappropriate to predispose the reader here.

This study is important because The Wildlife Trusts organisation had not previously been studied either in terms of its education provision or in terms of its position as an NGO. This thesis is therefore intended to be a valuable resource for The Wildlife Trusts itself, assisting it to choose future paths for long-term commitment to its

education work. Although this work is presented as a case study, it provides insight into other phenomena (Stake 2000:435) and so may be relevant to other conservation NGOs, especially in the UK but also beyond. Additionally the work has been designed with the aims of informing and assisting those working in the wider fields of environmental education research and practice.

The contribution of environmental NGOs to environmental education is very little understood. Certainly this contribution has been neglected, with few exceptions, by environmental education literature and research (Palmer 1998:121; Tomlins and Evans 1995) and has rarely been addressed in literature concerning conservation or NGO work. NGOs' contribution to environmental education needs to be explored in greater detail for a number of reasons:

Firstly, where literature does document NGOs' influence upon environmental education, it suggests that they may have a considerable impact upon people, encouraging the development of environmental concern and action (Chawla 1999).

Secondly, there is evidence that formal education institutions have faced and continue to meet sizeable difficulties in delivering environmental education (Fien 1993; Palmer 1998a; DETR 1997; DEFRA 2002). This is perhaps one of the most important rationales behind exploring the possibilities for an NGO's education provision. Formal education institutions might benefit from or indeed need outside assistance and the research questions of this study were chosen so as to indicate The Wildlife Trusts' current work in this respect and their potential for developing it.

Thirdly, if an NGO intends to engage in environmental education – and The Wildlife Trusts' request for an education review demonstrates that it clearly does – then there are challenges in communicating effectively with people, especially those not previously interested in environmental issues. The body of conservation literature reviewed in this study was found to highlight such a problem (Todd 1980; Fazio and Gilbert 1981; Brown and Decker 1982; Kennedy 1985; Lautenschlager and Bowyer 1985; Gray 1993). This literature, coupled with the historical accounts of The Wildlife Trusts' focus on wildlife and reserves rather than people, encouraged the author to enquire into the potentials and limits of The Wildlife Trusts' educational practice. It was intended that the research would reveal more about the culture of environmental communication and education aimed at the wider public.

One of the strongest inspirations for this study derived from a growing body of environmental education research investigating how life experiences or formative influences may develop people's positive attitudes, concern or knowledge regarding the environment. In particular, this study was guided by those researchers who have suggested the importance of outdoor experiences in developing a person's interest in, concern for or action for the environment (Tanner 1980; Peterson and Hungerford 1981; Gunderson 1989; Palmer 1993; Palmer and Suggate 1996; Sward 1996; Chawla 1999). Given The Wildlife Trusts' extensive work with outdoor nature reserves, the links between this study and past life experience research seemed especially relevant.

This study was guided by past research to include exploration of the important experiences and influences upon education personnel working within The Wildlife Trusts. Such exploration aimed to reveal something of The Wildlife Trusts' educational culture, as the author supposed that the educational culture of the Trusts

might be influenced and represented by the experiences and beliefs of the Trust educators themselves. This line of enquiry was designed to answer the study's core research questions, and also to present a valuable contribution to the existing body of environmental education research into life experiences.

The implications of this thesis' research now seem farther-reaching and even more relevant than at the start of the study. Very recently, The Wildlife Trusts were discussed in the form of UK 'front-page' news. On 7th October 2002, Michael McCarthy, Environmental Editor of the Independent Newspaper, wrote an article on the developing influence of what he called the 'soft environmental groups', focussing upon The Wildlife Trusts in particular. The growth of membership for The Wildlife Trusts and similar traditional groups '...whose typical attraction is to offer days out for the family at nature reserves' was reported to be overtaking membership growth of newer campaigning groups such as Greenpeace, Friends of the Earth and WWF (McCarthy 2002:1). The Wildlife Trust's Director General was reported to ascribe the rise in popularity of his organisation to better marketing, expressly aiming to appeal to wider audiences. The article stated that wildlife is no longer thought to be a 'middle class' interest and the Director General suggested that people are interested in enhancing their local environments rather than being solely concerned with global environmental issues.

Although newspaper reports should not be accepted as given truths, it is quite possible that the especially local level of The Wildlife Trusts' operation, as 47 individual Trusts, places them in a unique position for conducting meaningful environmental education experiences. This thesis' goals to understand what The Wildlife Trusts partnership does do and can do in delivering environmental education have become acutely apposite for The Wildlife Trusts and other NGOs that intend to involve and educate more people about matters relating to the environment.

1.2 Thesis organisation

The structure of this thesis is set out in accordance with long established and accepted protocol for social science doctoral studies (Nisbet and Entwistle 1970:168; Barnes 1992:130). After the study's introduction here in Chapter 1, Chapters 2, 3 and 4 review literature demonstrating the previous work relevant to this study. The literature chapters are followed by details of the thesis' research Methodology in Chapter 5. The study's results are presented in Chapter 6's Presentation of the Findings. Finally Chapter 7 engages the reader with Discussion and draws Conclusions.

Chapter 2 provides an overview of literature concerning **The Wildlife Trusts and the conservation movement**. From conservation writers such as Lowe and Goyder (1983); Adams (1996); Evans (1997); Sheail (1998) and Yearly (1991), it is possible to depict The Wildlife Trusts' development from its beginnings as the SPNR or Society for the Promotion of Nature Reserves and individual County Trusts. An account of The Wildlife Trusts' early days is set in the context of the conservation movement between 1912, when the SPNR was established, and the early 1970s. The literature reveals issues significant to this study's research questions, for example the changing roles, public involvement and Government support of nature reserves; the early Wildlife Trusts' limited public education and involvement of people and the factors leading to expansion and change for the Trusts.

The 1970s saw changes in both the UK conservation movement and the Trusts, for this was a period when matters of involving the wider public in conservation came to the fore. Hence a second major section in Chapter 2 is included to discuss conservation and people. In particular, the involvement of a wider public in the conservation movement is discussed, reviewing literature that documents the development of UK environmental groups' education programmes for both young people and adults.

Chapter 3's literature review focuses upon **Non-Governmental Organisations - NGO characteristics and the place of The Wildlife Trusts as a UK environmental NGO.** In order to fully understand The Wildlife Trusts' educational culture and the limits and potentials of its educational delivery, an understanding of its place as an NGO and its place amongst the work of other environmental NGOs was sought.

The literature reviewed in Chapter 3 was selected for its insight into the nature and operation of environmental NGOs. Such insight was viewed to be helpful for reading alongside this thesis' empirical research to indicate what NGOs might do in the field of environmental education. The writings of McCoy and McCully (1993); Princen and Finger (1994); Doyle and McEachern (1998), were particular valuable for explaining and defining environmental NGOs in a variety of ways.

Whilst the literature in the first two parts of Chapter 3 was selected to aid understanding of The Wildlife Trusts as an NGO, the author found that most literature was not Wildlife Trust specific. Reviewed literature that was found to relate more clearly to the Trusts includes historical accounts portraying The Wildlife Trusts' close links with the UK Government as well as a body of work involved in classification of environmental groups (Lowe and Goyder 1983; Micklewright 1993; Evans 1997 and Barkham 1989).

The literature reviewed in **Chapter 4** concerns **Environmental Education, Development of Understanding and Approaches**. The first part of the chapter examines the influence of conferences, initiatives and publications in order to introduce an overall context for how NGOs' and The Wildlife Trusts' environmental education approaches have developed and might develop. In particular, the UK's formal education initiatives are highlighted, including the introduction of the schools' National Curriculum 'Education for Sustainable Development'.

The second part of Chapter 4 traces trends in environmental thinking from the dominant paradigm of 1970s and 1980s research – the positivist, behaviourist paradigm, concerned with control and management (Huckle and Fien 1993; Robotttom and Hart 1993; Marcinkowski 1989; Palmer 1998) – to the more qualitative, interpretivist work that has sought to understand the ways in which people develop a relationship with and positively care for the environment. Review of such work culminates in a discussion of 1990s research into formative experiences and influences that lead to what the author terms as a 'pro-environmental disposition'. This term, introduced by the thesis' author refers to a person's or a group's possession or demonstration of elements of a positive person-environment relationship. These elements are: knowledge, attitudes, concern, sensitivity and pro-environmental behaviour.

Chapter 4's third and final section draws together the previous two sections' review of environmental education initiatives and environmental education research. The links between research and initiatives are examined; the author reviews how they have shaped each other, especially in matters of formal education approaches and school settings. The implications of initiatives and research upon The Wildlife Trusts and other NGOs are considered through review of documented examples of Wildlife Trust educational practice (Nicholas and Scott 1993; Palmer and Neal 1994). Chapter 4 also discusses challenges that literature reveals for The Wildlife Trusts' and other NGOs' environmental education practice, such as their involvement in formal education and the idiosyncrasies of NGO internal organisation and management.

In **Chapter 5,** attention turns to the thesis' **Methodology**. The Wildlife Trusts' education work formed the research focus; thus the thesis is presented as a research-based case study. The author was informed about case study theory by writers such as Yin (1994); Miles and Huberman (1994); Burton (2000) and Stake (2000) and so was able to defend the choice of a case study method for this work.

The Methodology chapter explains the selection of the sample. For the purposes of the commissioned review, the author visited every individual local Wildlife Trust (at the time of research there were 46 Trusts throughout the UK plus one National Office). 131 Trust personnel were interviewed using the questions from the education review. From within the 131-person sample, 12 education staff were selected to participate in in-depth interviews designed specifically for the doctoral study's investigation into The Wildlife Trusts' educational culture. Two other sample populations included: 40 visitors to Trust sites and a biased independent sample consisting of 64 people with some existing interest in environmental matters. The two external populations completed questionnaires for the education review, from which questions were selected for use in the doctoral study.

It is worth stating here that the study's whole design and conceptual framework was influenced by Grounded Theory and those who have discussed it (Miles and Huberman 1994; Charmaz 2000). For example, the education review provided opportunities to ground the doctoral thesis questions within the data and techniques of gathering and presenting rich descriptive data were used. A predominantly qualitative approach was deemed suitable for analysis and presentation in keeping with the theories of Hart (2000); Janesick (2000) and Smith-Sebasto (2000).

Chapter 6 is concerned with **Presentation of data** for the empirical study. The chapter is split into three parts that correspond to the study's three aspects of investigation: (i) The Wildlife Trusts' educational activities, (ii) strengths and weaknesses of educational provision and (iii) the educational culture of The Wildlife Trusts. Data are presented in a variety of forms: extracts from interview responses; tabulated and graphical representation of response frequencies; analysed description from Wildlife Trust documents and the author's observational notes.

The data are presented firstly through description of the educational activities carried out by The Wildlife Trusts, using responses to core interview questions addressed to the 131-person sample of Trust personnel.

Secondly, the strengths of The Wildlife Trusts' education provision derive from analysed responses of core interview questions and questionnaire questions given to

visitors and the independent sample. A combination of analysed core interview responses, views from visitors and the independent sample and the author's recorded field notes present the weaknesses of the Trusts' education work.

Thirdly, the educational culture is conveyed through analysed core interview questions exploring Trust personnel's conceptualisations of 'education' and hopes for Wildlife Trust education work. Additionally, in-depth interview responses from Trust education staff represent influences on development of the staff's concerns about wildlife and the environment.

The **Discussion and Conclusions** of the thesis are presented in **Chapter 7**. Findings of the study are discussed in the light of the literature reviewed. The Wildlife Trusts' work concerning education activities, strengths and weaknesses and educational culture are addressed so as to present the dominant themes that emerge when the study's results are read in conjunction with the literature. The Conclusions specifically respond to the research's two main questions conveying what The Wildlife Trusts organisation does in provision of environmental education and what it can do. Finally, the study's limitations are presented with suggestions for further research.

Chapter 2 The Wildlife Trusts and the conservation movement

2.1 Overview of Chapter 2

Chapter 2 is organised into two main parts: section 2.2 and section 2.3:

2.2 The Wildlife Trusts as a conservation organisation – its establishment and growth through the Society for the Promotion of Nature Reserves and the County Trusts.

Section 2.2 analyses literature relating to the development of the conservation organisation now known as The Wildlife Trusts. The organisation was formed from a collection of county naturalist groups and the Society for the Promotion of Nature Reserves (SPNR). The literature in section 2.2 is reviewed to present an historically and thematically organised account of origins of The Wildlife Trusts.

Section 2.3 is headed **Conservation and people – The involvement of a wider public in the conservation movement**. It addresses the response of conservationists as a whole, and where literature is available the response of The Wildlife Trusts, to the changing environmental movement of the 1970s, 80s and 90s. Section 2.3 is organised in six parts, each addressing a different aspect of the conservation movement's aims to communicate with different groups of people. Not all of the 6 sections make clear reference to 'education'. This thesis reveals that Wildlife Trust personnel use a broad set of definitions and audiences in connection with the word education. Such definitions include 'communication', 'people work' and 'participation'; therefore it seems appropriate for this literature section to review writing according to the same broad educational concepts.

Section 2.4 provides a **Summary of Chapter 2**.

2.2 The origins of The Wildlife Trusts as a conservation organisation - its establishment and growth through the Society for the Promotion of Nature Reserves and the County Trusts.

2.2.1 The aims of the Society for the Promotion of Nature Reserves

In May 1912 entomologist and banker Charles Rothschild founded the Society for Promotion of Nature Reserves (SPNR). Sheail (1998:5) provides records of the initial aims of the SPNR as follows:

1. To collect and collate information as to the areas of land in the UK which retain primitive conditions and contain rare and local species liable to extinction owing to building, drainage, disafforestation or in consequence of the cupidity of collectors.
2. To propose schemes showing which areas should be secured as nature reserves.

3. To obtain such areas and if thought desirable to hand them over to the National Trust.
4. To preserve for posterity as a national possession some part at least of our native land for its faunal, floral and geographical features.

Finally, a fifth aim demonstrated that an element of educational work was to be part of the SPNR's original functions:

5. To encourage the love of Nature and to educate public opinion to a better knowledge of Nature Study.

2.2.2 Early public involvement

There is little literature describing the educational activities that were employed to carry out this public involvement. However, David Evans' historical account of UK conservation comments on the type of education which late Victorian and early Edwardian conservationists were able to offer. In the early twentieth century formal education offered 'impersonal science' and 'nature study' which 'came to mean the dissection of dogfish in the classroom; biology considered the configuration of cells' (Evans 1997:37). Evans suggests that conservation societies such as the SPNR were therefore in a unique position to educate people by offering them direct experience of nature. John Sheail's (1998:6) reference to the SPNR's public liaison does not refer to the provision of direct experience of nature but communication with 'local societies and individuals' so as to demonstrate the purpose of the nature reserves. The need for this was raised at the SPNR's very first Executive Committee Meeting.

From the early period of Rothschild's SPNR, its public communication role faced difficulties. Prospects for widening public involvement and membership were hampered by a number of factors as explained by Steven Yearly (1991:54) in his sociological work on environmental issues. Yearly's work draws on Philip Lowe's unpublished 1972 thesis, which studied the effectiveness and organisation of a range of environmental groups. Yearly also refers to Lowe and Goyders' (1983) analysis of environmental groups to explain some of the SPNR's early problems in building public support. One of these problems was the fact that no fee was charged to new members so the Society had no incentive to increase its membership. Secondly, new members could only become associate members with limited influence, thus maintaining an elite original membership. Thirdly the early ruling council members of the SPNR were elected for life, resulting in all members reaching the end of their term of office at the same time. Although Yearly does not make explicit that these issues had direct effect upon the SPNR's educational role, it seems clear that they had some limiting effect on the Society's ability to involve a wider public. As Yearly states, the early 20th century was a time when the public did not understand the need for nature reserves and this necessitated some form of public awareness raising.

2.2.3 The origins of the SPNR nature reserves

The case for nature reserves has been discussed by Evans (1997:38). He cites Adams' (1996) work to explain that reserves were not created until the late 19th century. In 1865 The Commons Preservation Society, led by figures who later become involved with the creation of National Parks, began to protect places in the form of reserves. However, nature reserves were still not commonplace by the time

the SPNR began its work in 1912. The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) did not begin to purchase land until 1930 and so the SPNR's reserve acquisition was an almost unique mechanism for conservation during the period. The SPNR's aim to carry out some form of educational work was not an unusual aspect of the conservation movement of that period. However the first four aims of the SPNR, with clear focus on scientific wildlife recording within nature reserves, set the organisation apart from other groups (Evans 1997:46).

The nature reserves that the SPNR sought to acquire were not for the SPNR itself but as the third of the SPNR's original aims notes, for other conservation bodies– chiefly the National Trust – Rothschild's SPNR reserve initiative was directly related to gaps in the National Trust's land acquisition programme, which he thought to be a disorganised and ad hoc process. It was carried out with poor financing, poor forward planning and too great a focus on preservation of buildings rather than wildlife (Evans 1997:45). In reality, the SPNR later came to have little contact with 'The National Trust for Places of Historical Interest and Natural Beauty' which, established in 1898, grew to focus on conservation of heritage sites rather than nature. The SPNR's initial link with the National Trust meant that the SPNR grew within the context of a UK conservation-ethic, based largely upon aesthetics and emotion. Conservation had developed within the late Victorian social movement that was focussed on fashionable causes such as building preservation, outdoor recreation and protection of beautiful landscapes. Lowe and Goyder (1983:18) suggest that the wildlife conservationists and historic preservationists seem to have had similar interests right up until the late 1940's. The more popular preservationist ideology defined conservation, resulting in its closer links with historic preservation rather than wildlife protection.

Lowe and Goyder (1983:25) believe this preservationist conservation to have grown from a period of environmentalism in the 1890's that arose from a mid-Victorian response to industrial and economic growth. Lowe and Goyder postulate that environmental groups have often flourished in periods immediately following industrial and economic growth. People fortunate enough to be sufficiently removed from the day-to-day workings of industry were able to reflect on what had been lost. Loss of wildlife was believed to result from the habits of collectors, tastes for fashionable feathers and overindulgence in field sports (see Evans 1997:29-33). Groups of people who addressed such issues were usually wealthy and intellectual. They would use the outdoors for leisure pursuits, education and personal development through field clubs. The elite nature of these groups interested in wildlife preservation was certainly mirrored in the SPNR's membership protocol. Yearly (1991:55) alludes to the expediency of the Society's small membership, suggesting that it was beneficial for the future impact of the SPNR. As a small and relatively unknown group, it was able to use its anonymity to forge easy relationships with statutory and voluntary conservation bodies.

2.2.4 The formation of the County Trusts

In comparison to the SPNR's image, the National Trust's image continued to develop firmly embedded in the field of historical building and landscape preservation. Foundation members like Robert Hunter, Octavia Hill and Canon Rawnsley gave the National Trust a high profile. Yet once again, there were gaps in the National Trust's work that led to the formation of another body with aims to address the needs of nature conservation. This time it was not the SPNR that took on the role but a local

conservation group: the Norfolk Naturalists' Trust. It was when the National Trust refused to manage an area of the North Norfolk coast that the Norfolk Naturalists' Trust came into existence. The Norfolk Naturalists' Trust was formed in 1926 and although The Yorkshire Naturalists' Union of 1877 was the first county-based affiliation of nature societies, the Norfolk Naturalists' Trust may be considered to be the first of The Wildlife Trusts of today.

The initial function of the Norfolk Naturalists' Trust was to respond to the need for conservation at Blakeney Point and Scolt Head. The key figure leading this conservation was Professor of Botany Frank W. Oliver who studied this coastal area and was later able to help the Trust with fundraising. Oliver was very supportive of the Norfolk body's work. In 1927 he hoped that 'one might look forward to the time when every county would have a county Trust' (quoted in Sheail 1998:7). Sheail (1998:2) states that small county conservation groups may have held several advantages over larger bodies. The county groups benefited from their local connections and enthusiasm that arose through the networks and hierarchies that formed from their meetings. A further strength of a body such as the Norfolk Naturalists' Trust is noted by Evans (1997:52). He explains that a Trust, unlike a society, can own and lease land.

The formation of the Norfolk Naturalists' Trust was a mark of success for the conservation movement. Conservation had suffered from the effects of the First World War. Sheail (1998:8) records that during the war, the Board of Agriculture engaged land in food production rather than in nature reserves. The war then resulted in little use being made of Rothschild's initial list of potential reserves, only a few years after the SPNR's formation. Further set backs for the SPNR occurred in the 1920s. Rothschild died in 1923 and conservation was driven by wildlife protection laws, rather than the establishment of nature reserves (Evans 1997:47). For the period between the formation of the Norfolk Naturalists' Trust in 1926 and the late 1930s, there is little record of the work of the SPNR or County Trusts. In 1937 the conservation movement saw the first era of UK national government's involvement in conservation (Adams 1996:14); a group of members of parliament supporting the amenity wing of conservation were promised funding to set up a voluntary body for National Parks.

2.2.5 Conservation for scientific understanding

Interest in nature reserves was revitalised by the interest in National Parks. It was in response to rapid housing development of the inter-war period that both National Parks and reserves developed. The advent of the Second World War, surprisingly, furthered the case for nature reserves. Yearly (1991:60) cites Lowe and Goyders' view that the war served as a 'chance factor' leading to renewed action in creation of nature reserves. Yearly suggests that enthusiasm for conservation was abnormally increased and he cites E. Max Nicholson's opinion that the wartime enthusiasm for reserves was a suspension of 'normal British mechanisms for ensuring inaction' (Yearly 1991:55). Enthusiasm and forward planning was demonstrated in a 1941 conference on Nature Preservation in Post War Construction, organised by the secretary of the SPNR. A Nature Reserves Investigation Committee (NRIC) was appointed in 1942 as a result of the conference. Although the committee was chaired by Sir Lawrence Chubb of the amenity and outdoor movement, its work signalled a move away from preservation to a new understanding of conservation. Conservation was to become more than simply protection of wildlife by enabling both naturalists

and the wider public to gain more of a *scientific* understanding of nature. Conservation was defined in an NRIC memorandum of March 1943, as: ' the pursuit of scientific and economic studies, the enjoyment of nature by the public and promotion of education in Natural History' (Sheail 1998:19).

Balance between the scientific, amenity and educational roles of reserves was to become a persistent area of tension for those involved in reserve management. From 1945, there were further changes to reserve-based conservation. Firstly, John Dower in his 1945 report proposed that nature reserve acquisition and management should fall under the role of the National Park conservation work. However, the NRIC had indicated that reserves were already becoming part of scientific rather than amenity focussed conservation. Secondly, there were criticisms from those who saw that the scientific purpose of reserves was overemphasised. One of these critics was a leading RSPB spokesman, Geoffrey Dent. In response to the NRIC's 1945 draft list of reserves, Dent stated that he saw the need for less ecologically biased reserves and more 'propaganda' reserves. These were thought to enable the public to experience more wildlife in reserves than might normally be seen (Sheail 1994:125). Words like these were only partly heeded, for in 1947 the Report of the Wildlife Conservation Special Committee promoted a genre of conservation with an even deeper scientific rationale. Adams reports that the Committee drew up a list of 73 suggested National Nature Reserves (NNRs). The NNRs were to exist 'not only as a means of protecting wildlife for public benefit but also as areas that would make a significant contribution to the advancement of science' (Adams 1996:17).

2.2.6 Reserves for public education

The scientifically focussed rational for reserves did not entirely pervade future aims for nature reserves. The Wildlife Conservation Special Committee's work contributed to a notable milestone for conservation. As well as offering a clearly science-based rationale for reserves, the Committee's report gave details of the need for conservation education and the committee paved the way for the 1949 Access to the Countryside Act. The Report of the Wildlife Conservation Special Committee considered the need for reserves to offer education facilities. The purpose of the educational element was so that:

> The more widely this appreciation can be diffused, the sounder will be the mental and physical health of the nation and the safer will be the places where the pleasures are to be enjoyed (Huxley1947:13).

However, the Committee had no intention of opening up conservation education to a public any wider than those within formal education. The reserves were chosen for the education of school children, university students and teachers. They were acquired as small reserves converted from wasteland and without particular scientific interest. Clearly, educational roles of reserves were secondary to their scientific importance and the Report's statement on who would be involved in reserve management and educational work serves to illustrate:

> There are now suitable biologists who could be transferred to this service without making a serious competitive drain on other equally important biological requirements (Huxley. 1947:13).

The establishment of educational reserves and the larger NNRs was to be carried out by a statutory body named the Nature Conservancy. This and another body – the National Parks Commission – evolved from the work of the Wildlife Conservation Special Committee and The Access to the Countryside Act in 1949. The Conservancy was very much part of the scientific sector of the government's work. Arthur Tansley, as a distinguished Cambridge Professor of Botany and the Conservancy's founder and chairman, was a clear representation of its scientific function. E. Max Nicholson, who in 1952 became the second Director General of Nature Conservancy, stated that the body held a unique position as 'the first official science based conservation agency' (cited in Yearly 1991:56).

Sheail (1996:51) notes that the Nature Conservancy was indeed the first wildlife conservation body in the world to carry out work under the direction of national government. As the SPNR had primarily scientific interests and aims, this gave it status and firm grounding for relationship with the Conservancy (Yearly 1991:60). The link between these two bodies, one voluntary and one statutory, was further assisted by a key figure, Lord Hurcomb. Hurcomb was a both a Nature Conservancy officer and president of SPNR. He was able to forge good relations with Nicholson, the Conservancy's director. This link enabled the SPNR's acquisition and management of nature reserves to continue throughout the 1950s, avoiding the absorption of the SPNR into the Conservancy as some had initially feared. Eventually, during the 1960s the SPNR would take on management of the National Nature Reserves (NNRs) as part of its role.

2.2.7 Challenges for the SPNR and the County Trusts

After the conservation movement's initial post-war successes, opportunities for developing reserve-based conservation education were lost for a number of reasons. Firstly by the mid 1950's, commitment to the identification of potential reserves was dwindling, as only three of the original twenty four NRIC subcommittees remained (Sheail 1998:128). Secondly, it could be considered that the Nature Conservancy lost opportunities to embrace educational roles suggested by the Wildlife Special Committee. Meetings between the Conservancy and Treasury Officials might have enabled reserves to come under the aegis of the Ministry of Education (Sheail 1996:41). Thirdly, as A.E. Smith (1990:13) notes, the County Trusts did not become branches of the SPNR after the war. This prevented the SPNR from managing wide-scale promotion of local reserves, probably as a result of poor relations between SPNR and the Trusts. In May 1955 Lord Hurcomb the SPNR President commented on the 'extreme specialism and parochialism of local naturalists' bodies' (Sheail 1998:128).

In the late 1950s the SPNR was lacking in purpose (Lowe and Goyder 1983:153). The Society also suffered from an ageing membership – a problem that arose from the early membership rules. The SPNR was part of the voluntary conservation movement that Nicholson thought was characterised by 'elderly and largely passenger memberships and feeble finances' (Nicholson 1976:460-43 cited in Adams 1996:24). The SPNR, embedded in the post war conservation movement, was challenged from a number of directions, one of which was the Government as it questioned the roles of nature reserves. In response to the perceived need to expand agriculture, 1950's Conservative backbench MPs demanded explicitly clearer and broader roles for nature reserves. MPs suggested that the scientifically focussed Nature Conservancy body would have to be more accountable and should offer

nature reserves as 'places where practical experience could be gained in managing the wider countryside for the benefit of visitors and residents alike' (Sheail 1996:46). Nature reserves were once again required to fulfil amenity and educational roles rather than remaining places of scientific research.

2.2.8 Expansion of the County Trusts

One of the responses to Government interest in nature conservation was the late 1950s emergence of a co-ordinated movement of the County Trusts. In September 1957, A.E. Smith co-ordinated a meeting for all existing County Trusts. Trusts at that time included those established in Norfolk, Yorkshire, Lincolnshire and the newly formed Leicestershire and Cambridgeshire Trusts. Additionally, in 1956 the West Wales Field Society had emerged from the West Wales Naturalists' Trust (Sheail 1998:128). The main purpose of Smith's Trust meeting was to encourage the creation of new Trusts across the country and to discuss the need for the co-ordination and publicity for their work. The body chosen to do this was the Council for Nature formed in 1958, headed by Lord Hurcomb and based on the model of the North American National Audubon Society. The enormously successful North American society was established in 1896 and gained 38,000 members within its first three months. In North America, it co-ordinated conservation work at community, regional and state levels to control hunting of birds and animals. The UK Council for Nature, although working on a much smaller scale, gained only 400 national and local members yet met the Trusts' requirement in co-ordinating, campaigning and lobbying for seven years.

Lowe and Goyder (1983:156) suggest that it was the enthusiasm of the then Lincolnshire Trust Secretary A.E. Smith which both revitalised the work of the SPNR and promoted the formation of new Trusts across the country. Smith himself writes that the success of the Trusts through this period can be traced to their established liaisons with farmers and landowners, which raised their credibility. (Smith 1990:14). These liaisons were entirely useful to the Trusts during next two decades' major changes in agriculture. The 'agri-chemical' revolution of the 1960s and 1970s resulted in more intensive practice that used pesticides, herbicides and chemical fertilisers for increased production. These were issues that the Trusts and the SPNR were well placed to address. Lowe and Goyder (1983:158) suggest that the ability of the Trusts to talk to farmers, landowners and planners at a *local* level was crucial.

Between 1960 and 1965 the Trusts and the SPNR grew and took on new roles. The number of Trusts grew to 36 and their total membership rose from 3000 to 21 000 (Adams 1996:24; Dwyer and Hodge 1996; Sheail 1998). The Trusts and the SPNR assisted in the creation of some 84 National Nature Reserves (NNRs) by 1960. Some of these were owned by the Nature Conservancy, who had also listed 17 000 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) by 1962. When the Conservancy grew short of labour for the management of the SSSIs, it turned to the SPNR and the Trusts for assistance. This work in management of NNRs and SSSIs, according to Lowe and Goyder (1983:158), was to be the foundation of the SPNR's later reserve acquisition mechanism. The SPNR gained further status when the Council for Nature was no longer thought by the Trusts to co-ordinate their work effectively. The SPNR became the Trusts' co-ordinator in 1965. Lowe and Goyder suggest that the SPNR's new relationship with the Trusts conferred 'the sense of mission which the SPNR lacked' (Lowe and Goyder 1983:156 cited in Yearly 1991:57).

The SPNR's roles in co-ordination of the Trusts and management of SSSI's may be linked with the changes that the Nature Conservancy experienced. Full details of these changes are documented by Sheail (1993) and are not repeated here. One significant and notable change for UK conservation was the 1965 movement of the Nature Conservancy from its independent status as a research body, to become one of 4 bodies[1] working under the responsibility of the newly formed Natural Environment Research Council (NERC). This resulted in an overstated link between highly scientific research and nature reserve based conservation. Neither 'side' was happy with this alliance. Although the Conservancy valued its science and research responsibilities, it saw difficulties in persuading NERC of the importance in maintaining funds for land acquisition and management. It seems that this change resulted in a need for the SPNR to further assume some of the Conservancy's site management. Between 1965 and 1973 the Conservancy, as the major voice for conservation, lost its autonomy. This allowed the SPNR to strengthen its relationship with the County Trusts and distance itself from the Conservancy. Sheail (1998) suggests that SPNR Secretary A.E. Smith preferred the SPNR's link with voluntary bodies like the Trusts, rather than with the NERC bodies.

2.2.9 A rise in popularity for the conservation movement

The Trusts certainly benefited from improved relations with the SPNR, yet Trusts' development during the 1960s can be attributed to additional factors. Lowe in his unpublished thesis (1972:80) suggests that the older, more established conservation groups, such as the Trusts and the SPNR, benefited from external forces driving a new era of environmental interest. The catalysts included the North American environmental protest movement and a series of disasters for wildlife in the UK. In particular, the March 1967 oil spillage from the Torrey Canyon raised public awareness of human harm to bird life. The published environmental works of writers, especially Rachel Carson and Paul Erlich, raised the profile of conservation. According to Nicholson (cited in Newbold 2000), it was true that media based publicity was enabling the UK conservation movement to reach a new wider public audience. A personal account of Nicholson's directorship of the Nature Conservancy is recorded in the edited work of Newbold:

> When the time arrived for us to go public, around 1960, I started building up the conservation movement publicly. I had already made sure that prominent conservationists like Peter Scott and James Fisher would become the spokespeople for conservation on the BBC. With David Attenborough and others we soon had a first-class media group to convey the message. The public responded whole-heartedly; we increased our supporters from a few hundred in small societies to hundreds of thousands in large, important groups (Nicholson cited in Newbold 2000:115).

Publicity became a new and essential requirement for the work of conservationists if they were to tap cultural changes to gain support and membership. Adams heralds this era as one of great change for the conservation movement's overall appearance, shedding the image of a previous 'rather tweedy and paternalistic middle class movement' (Adams 1996:67).

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[1] Nature Conservancy, National Institute of Oceanography, Geological Surveys, Hydrological Research Unit. (Sheail 1993:52).

Up until this time in the 1960's, Smith (1990:13) records that the only other UK national conservation body of notable size was the RSPB. Between 1971 and 1972 there were talks about a possible merger between the RSPB and the SPNR who considered exploiting new public interest in conservation. There was no union of the two bodies, as the Trusts feared that they would lose their individual identities. The RSPB was similarly concerned to preserve its special focus on birds, which obviously appealed to the public as RSPB membership had grown tenfold from 1965 to 1975 (Adams 1996:24).

2.2.10 The transition from the SPNR to the RSNC

Change of image and role for the SPNR did nevertheless occur later in the 1970s, as it broadened its role and name beyond that of simple nature reserve promotion. In 1977 the SPNR became the Society for Nature Conservation (SNC). Not long afterwards in 1981, the Society received the patronage of the Prince of Wales and became the Royal Society for Nature Conservation (RSNC) as it is now. During the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s changes for the conservation movement occurred to which the SNC and then the RSNC and Wildlife Trusts had to respond. The changes included: the growth of other conservation organisations and broader environmental bodies; alterations in Government influence upon both statutory and voluntary bodies; the spread of conservation beyond reserves to the wider countryside and to urban environments. Conservation also became an international issue and the need for greater public education on environmental matters was evident. The transition to the involvement of more people in conservation is addressed next in section 2.3.

2.3 Conservation and people – the involvement of a wider public in the conservation movement.

2.3.1 Education of the public

Evans (1997) notes that children's education became a key goal for conservation in the 1970s and 1980s with the advent of many conservation bodies creating youth groups and children's clubs. In 1970 **European Conservation Year** promoted public involvement in conservation through field days, projects, lectures and publicity and the year's projects almost certainly acted as a catalyst for the next decade's rise in conservation education for children. Evans (1997:206) also attributes this period of public education and communication to the shortfalls of several conservation initiatives. For example the **World Conservation Strategy** (1980), the **Wildlife and Countryside Act** of 1981 and the **European Year of the Environment** (1987) did not reach public consciousness and impact upon people's lives as hoped. However, at the level of individual environmental groups there was considerable development in work with young people.

The **RSPB** established the **Young Ornithologists' Club (YOC)** in 1965; this junior wing of the RSPB aimed to encourage 9-16 year olds to become interested in birds through holidays, field trips and competitions (Perring 1983:444). The RSPB also began to run courses for teachers in the 1980s. In 1979 the **National Trust** took on its first education advisor, against the will of some leading figures in the Trust who took exception to the Trust's efforts to teach children. Jenkins and James (1994:266) explain that the National Trust's education work successfully began in 1976 with one education enthusiast, John Hodgson. Hodgson began an educational programme for

young people by developing the Young National Trust Theatre, which performed at a selection of National Trust properties around the Country. Since then the National Trust continued educational work with a specific team of educators established in 1988 and a lifelong learning programme called 'Minerva' which began in 1995. Its aim was for outreach to a wider audience of young people and adults (The National Trust 1995:33).

The then **World Wildlife Fund,** (**WWF** now the Worldwide Fund for Nature), created its Wildlife Youth Services, later to be replaced by its Education Section in 1981. WWF has promoted conservation, particularly through its provision of teaching materials on the subject of global environmental issues. The **Council for Environmental Conservation (CoEnCo)** was founded in 1969. It created a youth unit in 1978 and took steps to identify where conservation might influence the secondary school curriculum. In Perring's (1983:435) view, CoEnCo played an influential role in the 1980s by co-ordinating environmental bodies' vast collections of education resources and taking steps to reduce duplication of effort in resource production. **Local Authorities** followed the lead of voluntary bodies and developed a number of interpretation centres between 1970 and 1982 (Evans 1997:125).

For the **SPNC**, a major feature of its educational work was its association with **Wildlife Watch**, a media-led scheme aimed at helping young people become interested in wildlife. Wildlife Watch, known as Watch, began in 1971 as a Sunday Times Newspaper promotion of a national water pollution survey and in 1977 the SPNC joined the newspaper as a sponsor of Watch. Watch was established as an out-of-classroom education programme and as an independent charity in itself. It later became both a junior element of the work of the SPNC's successor **RSNC** and the local children's club for a number of **County Trusts**. A magazine called 'Watchword' was created for all Watch members and Watch club children received local newsletters and opportunities to participate in events (Perring 1983:435).

Within 5 years, Watch gained 15 000 individual members and became a 'junior section to the local conservation movement' (Evans 1997:125). Jones and Talbot (1995:14-17) document the history of Watch, since its inception, illustrating a continuously strong science-education basis of the Watch projects and clubs. Watch received publicity from David Bellamy as president in 1978 and continued to benefit from the sponsorship and publicity of The Sunday Times until 1992. Watch was featured on the children's programme 'Blue Peter' and the first 'Frogwatch' survey reached the attention of BBC Radio 4. The acid-rain focussed 'Acid Drops' project of 1985 marked a transition from Watch's focus on local wildlife to consideration of wider global environmental issues. This project, still very much grounded in scientific survey, successfully sent out acid rain survey kits on an international scale and received a European Year of the Environment Award.

Discussion concerning education of adults and the general public is presented in Bull's (1986) unpublished Ph.D thesis on the topic of the County Trusts' work during the 1970s and 1980s. He suggests that the Trusts' increased efforts in communication followed the RSPB's aims 'to reduce the elitism and isolation of the earlier days' (Bull 1986:60). Bull documents the 1970s and 1980s as a period when Trusts developed a number of education officer posts, education sub-committees, nature trails, talks, lectures and exhibitions all of which may be considered to reflect the Trusts' awareness of the need to influence the public's view of wildlife conservation. Perring (1983:436) explains that 'on-site' education became a feature

of the Trusts' work between 1970 and 1982 as the Trusts' created twenty nine interpretation/information centres during this period. Such development of education activities and adaptation of nature reserves for greater numbers of visitors were also efforts to increase Trusts' membership figures. Bull reports that Trusts encouraged members to visit reserves, not in the spirit of providing recreation or education, but for the purposes of raising finance for further acquisition of nature reserves chosen 'primarily on natural history/scientific criteria' (Bull 1986:274). Additional literature that outlines The Wildlife Trusts' educational work is reviewed in Chapter 4 section 4.4.2.1.

In the 1970s, educating people about conservation and the environment certainly emerged as a topical pursuit of UK conservation bodies, national and international initiatives. However, for the Trusts during the 1970s and 1980s, most efforts to involve more people in the conservation were concentrated upon the establishment of children's Watch membership, local clubs and materials. The limited available literature concerning the Trusts demonstrates that their chief involvement in the conservation movement remained more closely tied to science and reserves.

2.3.2 Publicity and public relations

The 1970s and 1980s were key periods for the conservation movement's involvement in educational work, whether for reasons of awareness raising, membership recruitment or as education to gain support for land purchase. It was not until the late 1980s and early 1990s that notions of education and communication really penetrated professional and academic conservation literature. North American wildlife literature was ahead of that in UK and a set of works, recognising the need for understanding the public prior to communication, appeared from the early eighties (Todd 1980; Brown and Decker 1982; Gray 1993; Kennedy 1985; Lautenschlager and Bowyer 1985). The prime subject for discussion amongst these authors is use of public communication and relations in order to raise public support for wildlife management. The term 'wildlife management' is used in the context of fur trapping, hunting, angling and aspects of the North American outdoor movement. The relevance of this literature about North American wildlife management is thought to extend to UK wildlife conservation, even though there are clear cultural differences in the conservation issues and the ways they are managed.

Todd's (1980) article Public relations, Public Education and Wildlife Management refers to change in wildlife management. He reports a change to wildlife managers' increased acceptance of concepts such as interdependence between human and natural ecosystems as well as respect for wildlife and the existence of spiritual and emotional interest in wildlife. Todd argues that wildlife managers should develop a greater understanding of the anti-hunting movement and its characteristics. He then advocates greater communication with potential hunting antagonists who could be persuaded to support hunting, angling and trapping bodies if they present their public images as 'protectors of all species' (Todd 1980:58). Todd stresses that this is more effectively achieved through use of public relations, rather than education. Although Todd seems essentially concerned with securing support for wildlife-based hunting activities, his writing served to precipitate works advocating that people with wildlife interests become better equipped with public relations skills.

Brown and Deckers' (1982) paper concerns the development of wildlife agencies' understanding of other wildlife organisations. Brown and Decker point out the value

of information gathered about wildlife organisations including their attitudes towards particular species, concerns about wildlife management and channels of communication between the agencies and the organisations (Brown and Decker 1982:687). Their study is primarily concerned with gaining support for state wildlife agencies' political decisions, amongst other wildlife organisations. Brown and Decker's work expands upon the work of Todd in that it highlights the potential benefits of establishing an understanding between parties with existing wildlife interests yet potentially different views on wildlife management.

Kennedy's (1985) article addresses a different aspect of wildlife managers' communication with the public; Kennedy takes on the role of 'viewing wildlife managers as a unique professional culture' (Kennedy 1985:577). Identifying the culture of wildlife managers is useful 'to gather the strengths from the advantages while minimising the disadvantages of one's professional culture' (ibid). He discusses the culture of wildlife managers in terms of their use of language, use of technology, social structure and professional value systems. Kennedy suggests that a particularly problematic aspect of wildlife managers' culture is its over-use of wildlife management jargon. The culture is also associated with utilitarian values of wildlife and mistrust of nature. Improved public communication is thought to be achieved by avoiding of some of these characteristics. Thus in advocating a movement towards greater awareness of the cultural flaws of wildlife managers, Kennedy implies that wildlife professionals may improve their images and communication potential with public audiences.

Lautenschlager and Bowyer (1985) are concerned with overcoming wildlife managers' failure to understand public opinion and communicate with the public, both of which can result in money wasted on campaigns and ultimately unpopular conservation decisions. Fazio and Gilberts' (1981) suggestion that wildlife professionals need to understand more about skills of communication is a view supported by Lautenschlager and Bowyer. Traditionally it has been the Information and Education (I & E) staff among wildlife managers who have the role of public communication, yet biologists and ecologists also have the potential to exploit media use and refine their own abilities to communicate beyond traditional use of scientific publication. New ways for ecology and wildlife managers to communicate 'should incorporate experiences, some basic ecology principles and be entertaining' (Lautenschlager and Bowyer 1985:569).

The final North American article under discussion here is entitled Wildlife and People, the Human Dimension of Wildlife Ecology (Gray 1993). Gray's article reflects on the transition from wildlife management – initially concerned only with 'the outdoors', hunting, trapping and fishing - towards a broader conservation interest. This shift in wildlife management parallels the UK conservation movement's shift from conservation of nature reserves towards interest in the wider countryside and conservation of urban sites. Such cultural changes in conservation present a need to develop public relations skills in order to gain support. Gray (1993:203) suggests that part of the answer lies in the publicity of plans and achievements. Gray proposes that this publicity is needed for both 'internal' and 'external' publics, which may not be mutually exclusive groups. Internal publics include wildlife professionals, biologists, scientists and wildlife administrators. Such people, with existing interests in wildlife, are considered to form an essential audience. Without the support of this group, Gray suggests that communication with external publics becomes very difficult. It seems that a solidarity and partnership

amongst a variety of wildlife professionals and bodies enables communication of a unified message to the rest of the public.

In order to relate to external audiences (wildlife 'users', businesses, landowners, outdoor enthusiasts and urban dwellers) Gray recommends pro-active rather than reactive communication, yet he acknowledges that '...wildlife agencies often wait until they are besieged by complaints about a plan' (Gray 1993:204). For efficient communication that saves time and resources, a 'top-down' approach is advocated whereby leaders of groups and communities are approached to disseminate information. This approach was later to be questioned by those concerned to promote involvement of individuals and communities in conservation (see discussion of Warburton's work in section 2.3.5).

Gray's article also considers the value of analysing the characteristics of public groups in greater depth. Gray suggests analysis of public attitudes and preferences for wildlife as well as aiming to understand implications these have for developing public communication and education. Issues associated with the process of developing concerns and beliefs are addressed further in Chapter 4.

The North American studies of public understanding, communication and wildlife management so far discussed are perhaps only loosely linked with UK environmental organisations' work with people. The literature so far reviewed in section 2.3.2 demonstrates a response to the anti-hunting movement of the 1970s and 1980s that aimed to draw together anti-hunting and pro-hunting groups. Although the conservation goals and techniques used by environmental groups such as the RSNC and the Trusts are different from those of North American wildlife management, the studies discussed here serve to illustrate that wildlife professionals' relations with the public deserve closer analysis and may be improved. For the purposes of identifying the limits and potentials of The Wildlife Trusts' education work, there is merit in understanding public perception of other wildlife organisations' work and in learning more about potential public support.

During the late 1980s and 1990s, UK began processes of investigation and reflection that were pioneered by Lowe and Goyder's (1983) work concerning the nature of environmental organisations and their support. This led to further in-depth studies of particular organisations. Studies which considered The Wildlife Trusts' work with people – in particular members and volunteers – were carried out by Bull (1986), Micklewright (1986), Juniper (1989), Dwyer and Hodge (1996) and Powell (1997). Section 2.3.3 examines this set of literature.

2.3.3 Understanding members and volunteers

Bull's (1986) unpublished thesis was written with aims to explore both the nature of the County Trusts as voluntary organisations and features of their collective membership.

Bull's study shows the Trusts' membership to be very middle class, (according to 'middle class' criteria which Bull identifies). Members were found to belong to two or more environmental groups and this, suggests Bull, represents a need for members to identify with a certain lifestyle or sense of belonging. Bull reports that members fit into two sets of 'intermeshing' typologies. One typology includes members who are either motivated by a wildlife/landscape interest or by self-interest. Within the

other typology members are either naturalists or rural preservationists/recreationalists (Bull 1986:266). Bull notes that many members enjoy wildlife for recreational purposes in contrast to Trust leaders who identify nature conservation as a scientific activity. The extent to which members may voice their recreational interests is limited as Bull points out that they have little influence in the Trusts' decision-making processes. Bull concludes his thesis by establishing that the County Trusts' membership may be used to confirm The Wildlife Trusts as a particular type of environmental organisation within Lowe and Goyders' (1983:295) model of the environmental lobby (discussed further in Chapter 3, section 3.4.3.3).

A second unpublished thesis concerning The Wildlife Trusts' membership was written by Micklewright. Micklewright's (1986) MSc thesis entitled 'Who are our Members? An Analysis of the Views and Attitudes of the Members of the Avon and London Wildlife Trusts, using a Questionnaire Survey' provides information regarding three aspects of two Trusts' membership. He examined members' social characteristics, their activities within the Trusts and their opinions of Trusts' conservation work. Of particular interest to this literature review is Micklewright's discovery that the Trusts are not always successful at keeping their members (Micklewright 1986:114). Additionally, direct quotes from members are illustrative of their concerns about issues such as: the two Trusts' image problems (ibid:97); the importance of leadership (ibid:96); the need for increased publicity (ibid:110) and the perceived need for more people to become involved in conservation (ibid: 80).

Although Micklewright's work focuses upon members' attitudes concerning Trusts' allocation of resources specifically for species protection, it is notable that Trusts' members place forms of education and local campaigning high among the priorities for Trusts' work (Micklewright 1986:112). Micklewright's brief research does illuminate a dichotomy between the principally recreational nature of Trust membership and Trusts' efforts to establish and develop reserves for their scientific and or natural history values.

Another unpublished thesis pertaining to Wildlife Trust membership was written by Juniper in 1988. His MSc thesis led to his (1989) article Marketing Nature Conservation. In these works, he develops some of Bull's conclusions by focussing upon the potential Trust membership. Juniper recognises that environmental groups must compete for public attention and justifies how an understanding of the potential membership 'market' is essential by suggesting:

> If conservation is to recruit wider support, promotion and products must be tailored to a broader base of opinion. This will rely on the systematic dissection of the stereotypes, pre-dispositions, attitudes and perceptions held by current and potential supporters (Juniper 1989:8).

To this end, market research such as the investigations into public attitudes towards nature conservation carried out by MORI (1987) and Gallup (1987) may be valuable. Juniper's own research moves away from market research style questionnaire and instead uses qualitative discussions with 4 groups of 7 potential members, suggested by existing members. Unlike Adams (1996:172), who cautions against the presentation of nature as a 'product', Juniper creates an 'optimum product proposition for the London Wildlife Trust' from discussions with potential members. It is defined as:

> ...an active, local organisation, involved with wildlife, in which you *can* participate, avoiding implications of academic interest/elitism, portraying the natural world in an accessible and exciting manner (Juniper 1989:11).

Juniper found that the participatory elements of the London Wildlife Trust were important to potential members, who held positive views of the London Wildlife Trust as a club, rather than a charity. Whereas the WWF and RSPB were viewed more as charitable conservation organisations, the London Wildlife Trust was thought to achieve more tangible outcomes as a club rather than a charity.

Juniper also investigated perceptions of conservation, which fell into three categories. For some, conservation was viewed as academic and old fashioned. Others thought that conservation was political, left wing and threatening. Finally, conservation, as carried out by the London Wildlife Trust, was perceived as wildlife orientated, which associated it with 'worthy' causes, enjoyment and experience of wildlife (Juniper 1989:11).

Though viewed positively for its dissociation with charitable work and its wildlife-centred conservation, Juniper maintains that the 'nationally disparate and confused image of the Trust movement' is problematic for the London Wildlife Trust and other Trusts (Juniper 1989:11). Public communication via national organisation of the Trusts is advocated by Juniper to achieve more cost-effective promotion. Juniper also proposes that use of national media would assist the creation of a stronger 'face' and 'personality' for the Trusts.

Juniper summarises his thesis by suggesting that the London Wildlife Trust and other Trusts should focus on promotion of *conservation's benefits* to potential members. These include aesthetic and spiritual aspects of nature that are purported by Juniper to be important in developing the attractions to wildlife which conservation professionals themselves have experienced. Although the promotion of conservation's most appealing attributes seems wise, it can be considered that Juniper's (1989:8) initial suggestions for recruiting wider public support do not tie with his thesis' results or conclusion. Rather, Juniper seems to propose narrowly targeted membership recruitment amongst people with characteristics similar to those of existing members.

Understanding the characteristics of members and potential members is an aim at the heart of Powell's (1997) study of a specific set of members, namely volunteers. Powell's study uses telephone questionnaires with 20 past and 20 present volunteers to addresses why people volunteer to work for The Wildlife Trusts, the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers (BTCV) and the National Trust. The rationale behind the study lies in the conservation movement's past reliance upon the assistance of volunteers. For future volunteer involvement, conservation groups must know what volunteers enjoy and how their experiences may be improved; Powell's study compares Powell concludes that most people in her study (79%) volunteered in order to gain experience for employment in conservation (Powell 1997:34). Altruistic reasons behind volunteering were only reported by 8% of the total sample.

A set of Wildlife Trust volunteer characteristics emerges from Powell's work. Wildlife Trust volunteers were found to be slightly older than National Trust or BTCV volunteers. They held wider roles less dominated by practical conservation and were thought to be more loyal to their organisation, retaining their roles within

the Trusts for longer. Powell illustrates that more training or in-house courses could benefit the volunteer experience, as this view expressed by one Wildlife Trust volunteer confirms: 'Once you start as a volunteer, there is little knowledge of what to do with you...they need more of a volunteer infrastructure.' (Powell 1997:40). Wildlife Trust staff are recommended by Powell to listen to volunteers and utilise their input. Smith (1990:15), as a leading RSNC and Trust figure, appears to assign great importance to volunteers within the Trust movement; he warns against the advent of paid staff increasingly undervaluing volunteer input. Powell (1997:37) indicates that Smith's fears may have been realised as '...around 40% [of volunteers] in each organisation said that they sometimes felt used or taken for granted'. Powell substantiates the research of Bull and Juniper by advocating close analysis of Wildlife Trust membership and by pointing to volunteers as a key set of people who can be encouraged to be of great benefit to the Trusts at a variety of levels.

2.3.4 Connecting people with nature

The 1990s was a period when conservationists developed their efforts in linking people with nature and highlighting the relevance of nature in people's lives. Literature on this subject addresses both theoretical underpinnings behind the conservation-people relations and practical means for making links stronger.

Adams (1996) considers that work with people should certainly fall within the remit of conservationists' jobs. Martin Spray, editor of the ECOS journal and Director of one Trust, is cited in Adams (1996:113). Spray suggests that it is the role of conservation to develop '...community of experience, the daily recognition of the existence and otherness of nature, its actions, its values, its rights'. Adams believes that, as Spray implies, there is a need for conservation to create regular and direct links between people and nature. Part of this role might involve explaining to those usually absent from the countryside why nature and wildlife might not be as impressive or abundant as is portrayed by the media (Adams 1996:110). Adams suggests that the conservation movement should offer skills so that ordinary people may relate to the nature they experience in their own lives; at the same time portrayal of nature as a 'product' should be avoided. Although Adams here and in previous works seems to be stating a case for making conservation 'socially relevant' (Potter and Adams 1993:48), it is evident that he has some misgivings about how conservation must change in order to achieve this. In particular, Potter and Adams (1993) debate conservation organisations' adoption of business-style practices in order to communicate with people and compete with other groups. (section 2.3.6 more fully discusses conservation's links with commerce).

Other key conservation writers have demonstrated the need for the conservation-people link. Pye-Smith and Hall (1987:48) refer to conservation becoming more available and accessible for people. Evans (1997:203) cites Moore (1987) who illustrates that in order to carry out conservation objectives, conservationists must be responsible for communicating with lay people:

> ...their greatest challenge has always been to put across the message in a meaningful way... The failure of society to act shows that conservationists are failing to communicate effectively (Moore cited in Evans 1997:203).

At a theoretical, but more global level, McNeely (1997) discusses current and future goals of the conservation movement. In his writing for the IUCN Biodiversity Policy

Coordination Division, McNeely lists two roles for the work of conservation organisations, both of which involve communicating with people:

> ... first, building greater understanding of the degree to which past human actions have set in motion irreversible and ongoing change in the natural and physical environments, altering the range of options available to human communities; and second, building the capacity of human societies to understand, adapt and respond to environmental change, a function of the cultural, economic and political contexts in which they operate (McNeely 1997:106).

McNeely discusses this wide role for the conservation movement, which in the context of the World Conservation Union must extend beyond small-scale wildlife conservation to a global approach for conservation of world resources. Nevertheless such an approach outlined in McNeely's goals may guide *local* wildlife organisations to accept a new and international notion of conservation that offers people the skills to become involved in the conservation process. McNeely seems to suggest that no longer can UK conservation groups limit themselves to the education of a select group of science-orientated academics as they did up until the 1950s. Approaches for assisting communities to understand and act in response to environmental change are now relevant for conservationists, who have a role in effecting people's participation at community level – addressed next in section 2.3.5.

2.3.5 Community participation

Diane Warburton is a key writer on the subject of participation in conservation. Warburton's works of 1993, 1995 and 1998 reflect the way that the conservation movement responded to the 1992 **UNCED Earth Summit**'s principles of involvement, as communicated through the **Local Agenda 21** process. Woolnough (1993) and Goodwin (1998) also offer comment and analysis of the rise in public participation in nature conservation. Each author addresses pertinent issues in the practical employment of the community participation approach whilst Woolnough considers issues specifically from a Wildlife Trust point of view.

In The Community Approach: Threat or Opportunity? Warburton (1995:31) documents elements of community initiatives and publications, which began in the mid 1980s. For example at Government level, **The UK Sustainable Development Strategy** and subsequent sets of funding involved community and participatory elements. **The Department of the Environment (DoE)** demonstrated its interest by funding initiatives such as the **Local Projects Fund**, the **Environmental Action Fund** and the **Single Regeneration Budget (SRB)**. Also at a statutory level, **The National Curriculum Council**'s (**NCC**'s) 1987 **Partnership in Practice** initiative was followed up by funding schemes run by **English Nature** in the late 1980s and 1990s. In particular English Nature, along with the **Rural Development Commission** and the **Countryside Commission**, funded **Rural Action** which offers grants to community groups (for an explanation of Rural Action see See Woolnough 1993:44 or The UK Biodiversity Action Plan 1994:112).

In the voluntary sector also, organisations attended to community participation; Warburton (1995:32) acknowledges that this is evident in **BTCV**'s Strategic Plan for 1993-1996, rural and urban projects of The Wildlife Trusts and **WWF**'s (1993) publication. **The National Trust** also demonstrated its awareness of the value of community and public involvement in its consultation report: Linking People and place (The National Trust 1995).

It is important at this stage to clarify what 'community' means and what is meant by 'participation'. A helpful notion of community is presented in the 1994 UK Biodiversity Action Plan; there are thought to be two kinds of community:

> - a locality, the people who live there and the systems within which their lives are organised;
> - a group of individuals who are associated through common responsibilities (such as landowners, parents), occupations (farmers, miners), cultures (ethnic or religious), or interests (bird-watchers, archaeologists, ramblers).
>
> (HMSO 1994:111)

Warburton (1998a) defines what she means by participation and how it has developed. In addition to the influence of Local Agenda 21, Warburton recognises the earlier work of the 1987 **Brundtland Commission** in promoting 'greater public participation in the decisions which affect the environment' (cited in Warburton 1998a:2). Before that, the community approach was growing amongst some UK city, housing and welfare planning initiatives during the 1960s and 1970s. Warburton's notions of participation are presented in a large set of principles which refer to community action, education, involvement, consultation and empowerment (Warburton 1998a:3). These are based upon the 1969 work of Arnstein, whose classic 'ladder of citizen participation in the USA' presents eight levels of public involvement from their manipulation, at one end of the scale, to citizen control at the other.

Warburton (1995) does not assume that there is one clear reason behind the conservation's movement's effort to include community participation. Instead, she offers a set of historical premises for the popularity of participation in the mid 1990's. Warburton suggests that a political power-shift occurred at a variety of levels, which opened up decision-making from the domain of 'experts' to a wider public. She postulates that this was partly due to Government desire to shed responsibility for difficult environmental issues and campaigns. In order to address this, Government embraced the fashionable and acceptable ethos of devolving power and changing situations through enabling voluntary groups and communities to take action. Warburton also suggests that both Government and non-governmental organisations were beginning to recognise the success of participatory nature conservation programmes. The success was deemed financial, as the Department of the Environment (DoE) (1996) notes: 'community-based, revenue supported environmental projects have been particularly cost effective' (cited in Warburton 1995:33).

Warburton recognises that other benefits of local community participation include: use of local materials, methods and labour; local fundraising and business involvement; the potential for constant appraisal of projects; potential to change attitudes, influence upon the behaviour of participants and also for raising local political support. A key advantage in local communities' involvement in conservation projects, suggests Warburton, is in developing a people-place relationship that arises when people become interested in local environmental issues. The experience of such involvement is what matters:

> ...community action is really about change – change of physical circumstances but also personal and social change; it is the nature of the experience and not just the

> activities which change people; and it is people who change the world (Warburton 1995:35).

Goodwin (1998) discusses the effects of the inclusion of community participation within the aims of the conservation movement. Goodwin sees participation as a 'mechanism for social change' rather than a 'conservation tool' (Goodwin 1998:17). The fact that participation does not necessarily act as a tool for achieving traditional conservation objectives is considered to cause conservation bodies to hold back full support for participation-led conservation programmes. This potential problem is one of a number of realistic challenges to the notion of participation. In particular, an issue conveyed by Shoard (1996) is cited here to illustrate that the conservation ideology might somehow be weakened by the involvement of non-experts.

Shoard is recognised as a strong figure in the conservation movement yet a writer who is concerned that local people may be too unskilled and unqualified to understand local conservation issues at a national level. Local individuals, argues Shoard, are driven too greatly by personal interests and too little by the altruistic motives traditionally associated with the work of conservationists (Goodwin 1998:13). However Powell's (1997) work has suggested that the notion of altruistic motivation is questionable, amongst volunteer conservationists at least. Other challenges to widening public involvement include conservationists' fears that a 'consumer experience' of the countryside might be created or that the image of conservation might be altered merely to make it more approachable and popular. Goodwin (1998) states that, in reality, local conservation initiatives do not always result in widening involvement or popularising conservation. Instead they often attract those already involved in active conservation.

Potential challenges presented by conservation professionals are accompanied by problems that are faced by the participants themselves. Goodwin draws on his (1997) unpublished Ph.D thesis for discussion of these issues. Once participants are involved in projects they can then experience feelings of impotence, perceiving that obstacles require experienced national decision makers to provide solutions. In addition, local participants may consider themselves as merely the ''hired hands' to undertake conservation action'. (Goodwin 1998:19).

Although Goodwin's research essentially recognises the potential mistrust that can occur between conservation bodies, agencies and the involved public, the research is able to praise some aspects of participation initiatives. For example, the process of wider involvement is deemed to act as a necessary form of 'social justice'. It also demonstrates that both conservation professionals and lay communities can have similar views on the countryside. Another benefit is the opportunity for conservationists to recognise the use of people's emotional attachments to places as equal to biological or scientific values of localities. Overall, Goodwin's argument seems to be based upon broadening a traditional conservation ideology to accommodate participation as a conservation 'management tool' which has the potential to create local people's support for both local and national conservation issues.

The requirement to alter 'traditional conservation' in order to achieve successful community involvement is addressed by Woolnough in his 1993 article The Community Approach – a Biodiversity Challenge? As a conservation director for the then Wildlife Trust for Bedfordshire, Woolnough considers the particular case of

The Wildlife Trusts' use of Rural Action and Local Agenda 21 in gaining public support for conservation. He readily acknowledges the changes the Trusts must make in order to do this and explains his views on the Trusts' need for different skills:

> If we need to make our beliefs relevant and important to people's everyday life, our traditional techniques will not do. It would be more comfortable to us, if some other organisation was charged with this responsibility and we could carry on doing what we do now. But if it is to be our job, perhaps we should stop employing so many highly trained ecologists and consider recruiting communicators – members of Equity, jugglers and storytellers (Woolnough 1993:47).

Woolnough's air of slight flippancy should not be misinterpreted. His views are from personal experience in running community projects and are therefore very valuable. Woolnough candidly admits that the 'community approach' appealed to The Wildlife Trusts for the funding opportunities it provided. For the Bedfordshire Trust, the Countryside Commission had financially provided for community involvement in the past, which was then continued by Local Agenda 21 and Rural Action. Although Woolnough embraces opportunities for developing community-focussed schemes, he explains that a Wildlife Trust officer, who takes on board community projects is often involved in a great deal of other work. Addressing the wider environmental issues of Local Agenda 21 can be considered by staff as a move away from the Trusts' central conservation goals, a move that can be costly in time and resources. Woolnough is not opposed to such a move per se. Indeed, he notes that it presents a useful opportunity to clarify what environmental concerns are of interest to a local community. A key feature of Woolnough's experience of community programmes is that it highlight communities' lack of interest in many nature conservation issues, in particular Biodiversity. This has implications for enabling Trust officers' traditional conservation and communication skills to improve for making Biodiversity relevant to local communities.

Warburton (1998a) indicates how the conservation movement may embrace increased community participation. Like Woolnough, Warburton recommends a change in conservationists' approach, but she also calls for change in the approaches of other public institutions, such as local authorities and national government. Warburton believes that all bodies involved in participation must encourage the involvement of a set of people who include:

> ...those local people who may be excluded from community activities: older people, people with physical disabilities, people from black and ethnic minority communities, young people, people struggling with poverty (Warburton 1998a:6).

Such views of participation are in conflict with the ideas of Bull (1986) and Juniper (1989) who both suggest that, for Wildlife Trust members at least, public involvement should be directed at the traditional audience of white middle class people who already have some interest in conservation issues. Warburton's point is one suggesting widening public involvement in conservation, rather than limiting it by either resources or goals for membership figures. Warburton (1998a:8) states the need for democratic approaches in conservation and she cites failed 'conventional', 'top-down' or 'expert-led approaches' as discussed by Gray (1993), Chambers (1997) and Oakley et al (1991). In attempting to change the status quo amongst the approaches of conservation professionals, Warburton notes similar barriers to those found by Goodwin (1998), yet she offers a 'toolbox' of ideas for change. Among the

recommendations are: feed-back and follow-up for participants after conservation programmes; rejection of the tradition to keep the public away from nature reserves and a conservation culture change so that conservation staff become fully accustomed to working at community level.

An example of planning for community environmental education may be found in the work of Jacobson (1997:11), who reflects on a programme of Rapid Assessment for Conservation Education (RACE). Jacobson (1997) recognises a clear need for the involvement of a variety of organisations in identifying a community's conservation education needs. Jacobson indicates that conservation organisations should aim to understand the characteristics and needs of the societies as well as other organisations with which it communicates. Jacobson's work is helpful in that it illustrates that an assessment or preparatory element of community participation is important for a number of reasons. It can identify the conservation needs of a community and it can recognise potential for partnership with other organisations (Jacobson 1997:16).

Warburton's (1998a) paper is essentially written at theoretical level but it does have practical implications for a conservation organisation such as The Wildlife Trusts. For example, such organisations need to become what Warburton terms 'listening and learning organisations'. They must then develop participation as a long-term process with mechanisms for assessing and evaluating the projects so that participation becomes the 'experiential form of community education' Warburton (1998a:8). Perhaps Warburton is unconscious of the challenge to such a move for the conservation movement, namely the complacent use of what Adams (1996:138) refers to as '...buzz words like 'participation' or 'bottom-up' planning' which do not alone guarantee success.

2.3.6 Conservationists' links with commerce

A public group that received considerable attention from conservation writers during the 1990s, comprised those involved in commerce, the business and industry sector. Potter and Adams (1993) were amongst the first to document the change of conservation culture in its adoption of business principles in order for conservation groups to manage competition for funds. Wallace (1997) and Potts (1998) question the nature of links between commerce and the environment. Barber (1998) addresses NGO responses to voluntary initiatives aimed at increasing levels of Sustainability and environmental responsibility within the industry and business sector.

Potter and Adams (1993:43) identify a major change for conservation. They suggest that the 'rhetoric of the market and the boardroom has been adopted by a new generation of conservationists'. The changes in both government agencies and NGOs are visible in their efforts to 'sell' to the public appealing aspects of conservation. Potter and Adams (1993) note that **English Nature**'s (1993) Strategy for the 1990s is a key example where the public is referred to as a consumer of nature. Potter and Adams suggest that **The Wildlife Trusts** and the **RSPB** respond to this move by employing key staff with skills in management and marketing in order compete for sponsorship most effectively.

The **RSNC** and **The Wildlife Trusts** are thought to be conservation organisations which have worked hard in responding to competition for funds, by renaming themselves and developing corporate images for more effective communication with

commerce as well as agriculture and other groups of the public. Such change arising from inter-NGO competition may reduce inter-Trust differences or alternatively waste potential for co-ordination of their common goals (Potter and Adams 1993:50). Although Potter and Adams do not offer an alternative to the conservation movement's adoption of 'business-style' tactics to protect wildlife, their article invites caution. It questions the extent to which binding principles of conservation may be lost when individual NGOs are forced to fight for themselves. Potter and Adams open up important new debate about the conservation movement's engagement with people.

Wallace (1997) and Potts (1998) document NGO-businesses relationships in a less reflective way. These authors are not so much concerned with a deep culture change for conservation, but rather the immediate ethical dilemmas resulting from environmental organisations' partnership with the corporate sector. Wallace recognises the fact that partnership that reflects businesses' 'concern' for environmental issues is good for the businesses' public relations. For both NGOs and businesses, goals of Sustainable Development may be satisfied. Wallace cites examples where links are being developed in the UK between **RSPB** and Tesco[2]; **WWF** and B&Q; **Greenpeace** and Calor Gas and **Friends of the Earch (FoE)** and The Triodos Bank. Wallace appears cynical of such relationships, suggesting that the environmental groups risk losing support from others groups and from the wider public who may disagree with such alliances. Wallace also fears that the environmental sector may not benefit so greatly as the business groups, due to the paucity of environmental groups' policy documentation defining how business-environment relationship should be conducted (Wallace 1997:17). Such policies, argues Wallace, are necessary for NGOs to make use of corporate sponsorship on *their* terms, therefore making the relationship of greatest value to the conservation movement.

Potts (1998) as a former director for both **BTCV** and **The Wildlife Trusts**, offers retort to Wallace. He points to The Wildlife Trusts' policy guidelines for working with business and Potts maintains that there exists a very open relationship between the Trusts and their partners in commerce (Potts 1998:58). Potts is optimistic that partnership can be mutually beneficial to both parties. He cites the case of BHS[3] sponsorship and publicity for The Wildlife Trusts' 'Frogwatch' scheme that developed from a BHS director's personal interest in wildlife. Potts also praises Tesco's work with the RSPB, which demonstrates the company's interest in issues of Biodiversity. Potts believes that more companies should be encouraged to engage in NGO partnerships which can genuinely improve the 'environmental performance' of the business sector (Potts 1998:60).

The arguments in Barber's article written for **UNEP** (1998) report NGOs' mistrust of multinational business initiatives and are more akin to Wallace's cynicism. Barber discusses initiatives where businesses and industries employed **Agenda 21** Principles. Barber also examines aspects of the 1998 session for the **UN Commission on Sustainable Development**. Barber cites the words of a **Greenpeace** official who considers that, in attempting to address environmental issues, businesses have own their public images at heart: 'Self-regulation serves to stave off the efforts of governments and citizens' groups to impose tougher controls

[2] Tesco is a chain of supermarkets. B&Q is a chain of hardware stores and Triodos Bank is a Bristol based bank that promotes its ethical and environmental investment schemes.
[3] BHS, formerly British Home Stores is a chain of UK shops selling clothes and home décor items.

on the trans-nationals' (Karliner 1998:48 cited in Barber 1998:20). Barber makes it clear that companies may voluntarily develop their environmental initiatives purely to pre-empt attacks from environmental organisations; he discusses several cases of business initiatives that give environmental NGOs good reason to be sceptical. These include instances where companies report lack transparency and cases where business publicity is the focus of action rather than change of environmental practice. Barber's examples of NGO suspicion may serve as guidelines for conservation organisations such as The Wildlife Trusts, guiding them to rigorously question their own partnerships and business initiatives.

2.4 Summary of Chapter 2.

The literature reviewed in Chapter 2 reveals that there have been key phases in the development of the organisation now known as The Wildlife Trusts. The characteristics of these phases are summarised here, where possible demonstrating how the education activities of The Wildlife Trusts, their limits and potentials, have historical foundations:

- Gaps in early twentieth century conservation ideology and practice that enabled the formation of the SPNR and Trusts, permitting them to become agencies of change in wildlife and habitat conservation from the 1920s onwards, though rather less visibly than other institutions such as the National Parks Commission, National Trust and RSPB.

- Wildlife and habitat protection as the SPNR's and the Trusts' core aims which they sought to achieve through strong relationship with Government and land acquisition rather than education and publicity work.

- From 1912 up until the 1940s, limited education work that focussed upon communicating with academics and wealthy intellectuals who maintained interests in natural history then later, during the 1940s and 1950s a phase of conservation education that used less scientifically valuable reserves, aimed at students in schools and universities who were likely to perpetuate specialist scientific knowledge.

- The 1970s environmental movement to which the County Trusts brought some strengths; between them the SPNR – later the RSNC – and the Trusts had a strong national and local influence in reserve creation and management. They also had potential: to use their reserves to deliver experience based education; for good work relationships with Government conservation bodies; for a strong scientific reputation and for addressing agricultural change.

- The conservation movement's involvement of a wider public during the 1970s and 1980s when the Trusts became known as The Wildlife Trusts and shed some of their traditional and elitist image to appeal to a wider public, particularly through programmes of informal children's education such as the Wildlife Watch club. Internationally, this phase corresponded with research literature revealing the need for conservation organisations to consider more deeply the ways by which they communicate to different audiences.

- Awareness of Wildlife Trust members' and volunteers' characteristics and concerns arising from research carried out during the 1980s (Bull 1986; Micklewright 1986; Juniper 1988; 1989; Powell 1997). Wildlife Trusts' strengths and potential were revealed to include the recreational rather than scientific experiences of wildlife habitats, spiritual and aesthetic qualities of wildlife experience, the club characteristics of the Trusts and the potential for volunteers to be loyal to their Trusts. Equally, members and volunteers reported weaknesses relevant to this study: the Trusts' academic, old fashioned, political and worthy images, the Trusts' indistinct public face or personality and lack of direction given to volunteers.

- The rise in community participation during the 1990s as a relevant yet testing theme for the conservation movement (Warburton 1998a; 1998b; Goodwin 1998). This phase highlighted the potential for The Wildlife Trusts to respond (Woolnough 1993), providing opportunities for communities' participation in conservation through adopting an ethic of involvement rather than exclusion of people in wildlife habitats.

- Potential for links between conservation bodies and corporate actors that became apparent during the 1990s. The Wildlife Trusts have been presented with possibilities to behave more as a *non-governmental* organisation, exchanging some of the Trusts' Government support for commercial funding, publicity and engagement of corporate actors in environmental practice, whilst avoiding loss of public support for the conservation movement and the organisation.

Chapter 2 has started to build a picture of how past phases of The Wildlife Trusts' development address some of this thesis' research questions. The following review of literature provides a closer understanding of what it is to be a non-governmental organisation, presenting insights into the extent to which the Wildlife Trusts can be classified as an NGO.

Chapter 3 Non-governmental organisations – NGO characteristics and the place of The Wildlife Trusts as a UK environmental NGO.

3.1 Overview of Chapter 3

Chapter 3 is divided into 5 sections; the first and last act as an introductory overview and summary respectively. Of the 3 main sections, **3.2 Understanding NGOs** and **3.3 New themes for NGOs – Biodiversity and Sustainability** are reviews of literature that aid understanding of environmental NGOs in general and present the most pertinent issues of NGO operation. It should be noted here that all this thesis' references to NGOs are confined to discourse concerning *environmental NGOs.* Section **3.4 The Wildlife Trusts as an NGO** reviews the limited literature that enables understanding of The Wildlife Trusts, in particular, and its place as an environmental NGO and UK conservation body.

The literature reviewed in Chapter 3 goes beyond the field of The Wildlife Trusts' work for several reasons. Firstly a review of key environmental writers' views about environmental NGOs and how they operate is thought to present a helpful context for understanding how The Wildlife Trusts do or do not fit within accepted NGO roles and definitions. Secondly, the literature available concerning The Wildlife Trusts as an environmental NGO is scarce, so a broader perspective is taken.

A **Summary of Chapter 3** is presented in **3.5**.

3.2 Understanding NGOs

3.2.1 NGOs as distinct from governments

> The term 'non-governmental organisation' has been widely used to describe groups with a broadly green, leftist or liberal agenda working to increase awareness or to change policies on environment, development and/or human rights issues and/or to implement projects which have the aim of improving people's living standards or protecting the environment (McCoy and McCully 1993:65).

Such a view of non-governmental organisations is provided in a context of reflection upon NGOs' place within the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), otherwise known as the Earth Summit, held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. The term NGO, as 'a community of citizens, organisations, professional associations, trade unions and activists' (McCoy and McCully 1993:12) can be said to have emerged from United Nations (UN) use in the Earth Summit process, and has now gained far wider recognition and application.

McCoy and McCully (1993) and Princen and Finger (1994) are authors who provide valuable comment and analysis of environmental NGOs. They draw attention to one obvious feature of NGOs in that the groups labelled as 'non-governmental organisations' are described by what they are *not.* McCoy and McCully view this negatively, yet Princen and Finger see the 'non-governmental' element of such

bodies as an important and positive description. A footnote in Princen and Fingers' book describes environmental NGOs as:

> Those non-profit groups whose primary mission it is to reverse the environmental degradation or promote sustainable forms of development, not to pursue the objectives of governmental or corporate actors (Princen and Finger 1994:16).

It might be proposed that Princen and Fingers' concept of NGOs is not entirely appropriate for all environmental groups that, either purposely or inadvertently, pursue the same objectives as governmental or corporate bodies. Close NGO-government links may be viewed with suspicion yet government-NGO relationships can be of value when NGOs' work places them in a good position to bargain with governments, appeal for funds and use media to communicate widely (Princen 1994:34).

Princen and Fingers' clear argument for NGOs to work outside the remit of governments is associated with their notion of environmental NGOs as 'agents of social learning'. Such a role requires NGOs to be able to work '...with little fear of offending constituencies or losing customers' (Princen 1994:11). Princen and Finger doubt the quality of social learning in environmental matters that might be promoted by governments or business which have key interests in national or global economies based on resource use, military expansion and 'progress at all costs'. Such argument for NGO independence from governments is developed by Finger who presents a case for NGOs to work apart from government and corporate actors and outside the realm of traditional politics. Traditional politics, he maintains, is still influenced by the goals of enlightenment and modernism – goals concerned with '...the pursuit of exclusively economic, political, technological and educational solutions'. Finger suggests that '...only a change in perspective can help us learn our way through the [environmental] crisis' (Finger 1994:64). NGOs, suggests Finger, can offer this change of perspective. Their independence restricts them to neither a governmental style of 'top-down' decision-making nor a strictly 'bottom-up' process which, being local and participatory in nature, runs risks in effecting only small-scale change. The freedom of NGOs lies in that they are well placed to act outside traditional politics and national government.

3.2.2 NGOs and political theory

3.2.2.1 Postmodernism

According to Finger (1994:61), the domain of political theory for such NGO action is one of postmodernism. Postmodernism recognises a 'fragmentation of world views' and the possibility for the involvement of an increased number of people in response to environmental problems, albeit in a potentially incoherent and fragmented way. NGOs are thought to be an 'expression of this fragmentation' (Finger 1994:61). The widening of people's involvement in environmental politics is discussed at great length by Finger (1994) in his review of how NGOs might work within a similar, but alternative concept to postmodernism, namely Third System Theory.

3.2.2.2 Third System Theory

Third System Theory invites ordinary people into political processes and goes beyond merely involving the 'prince' or government from the 'first system', or the

'merchant' or commercial actors of the 'second system'. Third System Theory enables political participation to become available to the 'third system', that is to say 'the public'. Problematically, Third System Theory presents environmental problems as political problems that may be addressed simply by involving more people, assumed to be a global homogenous mass, in existing political processes (Finger1994:58). In short, if NGOs work within Third System Theory, they take part in a social movement directed by state-led politics. Finger (1994) maintains that NGOs should work outside state-led politics, and his work with Princen clearly indicates that NGOs do not become part of social movements, but respond to them.

3.2.2.3 Social Movements

Finger (1994:49) defines a social movement as '...strategy to articulate common interests'. Although Environmental NGOs respond to social movements, they are not analogous to them because, unlike social movements, NGOs '...individually and collectively communicate diverse interests' (ibid). Doyle and McEachern's (1998) understanding of the term 'social movement' is somewhat different from that discussed by Finger but can be thought to be linked to Third System Theory. They suggest that a social movement is:

> ...used to refer to the form in which new combinations of people inject themselves into politics and challenge dominant ideas and give constellation of power (Doyle and McEachern 1998:56).

It is Doyle and McEacherns' portrayal of western environmental movements that is most valuable as a means to understand environmental NGO development. Doyle and McEachern identify three western European environmental movements as social movements: the 'Political Ecology Movement', the 'Anti-Nuclear Movement' and thirdly the 'Nature Conservation Movement', as the oldest branch of the environmental movement. Instead of adopting Princen and Fingers' ideal for NGOs to work outside political frameworks, Nature Conservation NGOs use an 'appeal to the elites' method of communicating with governments and decision-makers (Martin 1984 in Doyle and McEachern 1998:91). This means that such NGOs must communicate within the existing language of politicians and decision-makers.

3.2.2.4 Pluralism

Doyle and McEachern propose that NGOs are susceptible to becoming entrenched in the politics of the social movement with which they were first associated. However, NGOs are by no means restricted to such movements (1998:84-85). Similarly, NGOs are not restricted to developing within a firm post-modern model, which requires extreme change and rejection of state-influenced politics. Doyle and McEacherns' alternative political model for environmental NGOs is the Pluralist model. This model sees NGOs gaining political influence indirectly via members and public opinion, even though these people themselves might seek change through traditional politics. The benefits of this include the involvement of more people in decision-making processes, the diffusion of power and greater neutrality of state governments. Overall, the Pluralist model of Doyle and McEachern is more in line with the Political Ecology Movement criticised by Chatterjee and Finger (1994).

3.2.2.5 Political and Global Ecology

Chatterjee and Finger (1994:65;69) suggest that 'the new trend' towards Global Ecology, which emerged in the mid-1980s, required NGOs to move away from both the Nature Conservation Movement and the later Political Ecology Movement. Finger criticises political ecologists for their lack of global awareness:

> ...political ecologists have mainly focussed on national politics... Pre-occupied with national and regional eco-political issues, political ecologists totally missed the trend toward global ecology (Chatterjee and Finger 1994:70-71).

For Chatterjee and Finger, with their clear interest in international NGOs and globalisation of NGO processes, Global Ecology is a more fitting environmental movement to which NGOs should respond.

The element of the environmental movement, known as Global Ecology resulted from recognition that environmental problems arise from people or 'actors' at global economic or political levels. Thus some NGOs from the mid 1980s onwards, became involved in the Global Ecology Movement, and took part in a process that Princen and Finger call 'upstreaming' or communicating in a political forum that was no longer state-centred but global. This process was enabled through international environmental initiatives and conferences that culminated in UNCED, or the Earth Summit in 1992. It was the 1992 Earth Summit that epitomised the new environmental movement of Global Ecology and gave NGOs opportunities to become involved in larger scale political processes associated with decisions about the environment. Various other impacts of the 1992 UNCED Earth Summit upon NGOs are also addressed next in section 3.2.3.

3.2.3 NGO characteristics and influences upon their success

3.2.3.1 Diverse activities

McCoy and McCully (1993:66) report that the UNCED process defined the NGO as a 'non-profit group concerned with social justice and/or environmental protection'. The role of NGOs was revealed to be far more complex and diverse than this, after the Summit itself. Finger (1994:186) reveals that the Summit demonstrated the great variation in NGOs, according to their budget size, staff, activities and period in existence. Categorising roles of NGOs therefore appears to present difficulties because of their diversity. The diversity amongst NGOs and within NGOs is so great that the existence of a clear phenomenon such as the 'NGO phenomenon' is doubtful (Princen and Finger 1994:6). Tellam, of the World Information Service on Energy (WISE), who writes in McCoy and McCully's (1993) book, also suggests that an integrated NGO movement is unfeasible due to the multiplicity of NGOs' goals.

Princen and Finger propose that the Summit process revealed immense diversity not only amongst a set of NGOs but also *within* single NGOs. This wide range of activities is thought necessary for an NGO to achieve its aims, even when the NGO has a particular focus (Princen and Finger 1994:7).

3.2.3.2 *Internal organisation*

It is thought that besides a diversity of goals and activities, the internal organisation of NGOs is a key aspect of NGO operations in addition to being an important influence upon NGO success (McCoy and McCully 1993; Doyle and McEachern 1998). If government influence is sought, then McCoy and McCully (1993:13) advocate co-ordinated internal partnerships, especially for NGOs to be effective in participating in UN processes. These authors claim that:

> ...internal structures of NGOs, often informed by their goals and ideologies, dictate the extent to which they establish relationships with governments and/or business corporations (Doyle and McEachern 1998:104).

3.2.3.3 *Scale of operation*

An NGO's success is, for Princen and Finger (1994:7), to some extent measured by its durability. Local NGOs are thought to have a reduced chance of permanence due to difficulties in building relationships and networks with larger bodies and institutions. Capacities for effective fund-raising and internal organisation, as well as the choice of environmental issues on which to focus, are also factors impacting upon the life of NGOs. According to Princen and Finger, NGOs are needed at a very local scale for individual people who may be unable to activate a transformation or co-ordinate a social movement. However, Princen and Finger guard against implying that environmental NGOs are in a position to offer people an unquestionably clear and honest way to address a global crisis. The very fact that NGOs are non-profit organisations leaves them accountable to no one.

3.2.3.4 *Public support*

McCoy and McCully (1993:16) suggest that a clear characteristic of NGOs is their ability to communicate to audiences beyond those that might be tackled by governments alone. Use of media is presented as an important part of NGO strategy. In the particular context of the Earth Summit, the UN viewed NGOs to have a role to 'Serve as an important channel to disseminate its results, as well as mobilise public support' (cited in McCoy and McCully 1993:66). The responsibility of NGOs to communicate with ordinary people and enable them to achieve change in the environment seems to be an issue of debate. McNeely, who writes for the IUCN on matters of Biodiversity, purports that the role of NGOs may actually be decreasing and decrease further in years to come, due to individuals and communities gaining more direct access to decision-making. McNeely notes that numbers of NGOs have decreased between the years 1972-1997 particularly in Europe, North America, Asia and Latin America (McNeely 1997:65). It may be that NGOs' success may rely more and more greatly upon their abilities to gain support from public groups and individuals who feel they can directly imbue action and change. If this is the case at local levels, then it is necessary to examine the global context for NGOs' work.

3.2.4 A global context for NGOs

It is recognised that global economic and political forces act upon the environment and the worldwide scale of environmental problems may call for a response that is global. Authors Harrison and Burgess (1994) and Lacey and Longman (1993) have observed development of a public understanding of the global nature of

environmental issues. These writers suggest that the media chooses what global issues are 'newsworthy' and therefore plays a part in 'globalising' issues for the public. Such media coverage, in turn, attracts the attention of politicians and key establishment figures who go further to legitimise public concern for certain global issues. Detailed discussion of the nature of globalisation of environmental issues is too broad and lengthy to be dealt with in this study. Here it is important to focus upon what appear to be key influences that have resulted in a relationship between NGOs and global environmental politics.

This section highlights the global environmental initiatives, conferences and publications that have influenced NGOs' involvement in global levels of action. Such initiatives have worked in three ways: firstly to present matters of conservation, the wider environment, development and awareness raising as matters for worldwide concern. Secondly, initiatives have invited NGOs into a global arena of environmental debate amongst many nations. Thirdly the initiatives, at the same time, have called into question just how feasible it is for NGOs to work within contexts of global environmental policy-making, many of which have been essentially government-directed.

3.2.4.1 Global environmental initiatives 1972-2002

The first global environmental conference to be held was the 1972 UN **Stockholm Conference on the Human Environment**. In Kirkby, O'Keefe and Timberlake (1995:26), Philippe Sands suggests that Stockholm was '...the pre-cursor of today's environmental movement' and Tolba et al (1992), in their report, The World Environment 1972-1992 mark Stockholm as a starting point of large-scale environmental action. Owing to the conference's two years' preparation, its emphasis upon regulation, pollution control and nature conservation and its consideration of environment in association with economic development the Stockholm Conference certainly created public interest in the environment. Among its great achievements, Stockholm's recommendations led UNEP and UNESCO to launch an **International Environmental Education Programme** (IEEP) designed to promote exchange of ideas amongst leading figures in environmental education. This culminated in the **Belgrade Charter – A Global Forum for Environmental Education** (UNESCO 1975) (See Chapter 4 section 4.2.2 for further discussion on these educational initiatives). The Stockholm Conference also succeeded in setting a plan for future action by generating conference Principles that became a forerunner of UNCED's **Agenda 21** twenty years later.

In the same year as the Stockholm Conference, Meadows et al (1972) published the results of the Club of Rome's Limits to Growth project. The publication presented a global model of trends of population growth and resource use, proposing the likelihood of environmental disaster ahead. There were criticisms of this publication and Meadows et al (1972:21) themselves recognised that their model was 'imperfect, oversimplified and unfinished'. Limits to Growth provoked debate, headed a number of future endeavours at global environmental modelling and had an impact upon the public (Tolba et al 1992:804).

Major international conferences and reports to follow those of 1972 included the 1980 World Conservation Strategy (IUCN/UNEP/WWF) subtitled 'Living Resources Conservation for Sustainable Development'. This was followed by Our Common Future otherwise known as the Brundtland Report. It was published by the World

Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) in 1987 and the World Conservation Strategy's follow-up report Caring for the Earth: A Strategy for Sustainable Living was published by IUCN/UNEP/WWF in 1991. For NGOs, the most influential global conference took place a year later in the shape of the **United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED)** held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in 1992. The chief global initiatives for the preceding 20 years had served to offer opportunities for:

> ...sharing appreciation of common problems and the array of policy instruments that can be used to respond – a sharing of awareness and experiences (Doyle and McEachern 1998:165).

In this way, the initiatives of the previous 20 years were seen to provide a lead up to the Rio conference and simultaneously generate expectations for Rio to build upon and surpass the outcomes of all previous global initiatives. Rio can be seen as something of an 'end product' today. Even after more recent global meetings, (such as the 1997 '**Rio plus 5**' conference in New York and the Climate conferences of **Kyoto** in 1997, and **The Hague** 2000 and the Sustainability-focussed conference '**Rio plus 10**' in Johannesburg 2002), the 1992 Summit is still regarded as the best-known global environmental conference. Arguably, it has produced the most significant of global environmental strategies and considerable impact upon NGOs.

3.2.4.2 NGOs and the 1992 UNCED Earth Summit

The outcomes of Rio have undergone substantial discussion since then. In this thesis, it is most valuable to concentrate on NGOs' relationships with the UNCED event and process. Unlike the previous global meetings and publications that focussed on issues of North-South inequity, growth and development, Rio's framework was far greener. The 178 governments in attendance at Rio addressed global scales of nature conservation, whilst Rio's simultaneous NGO summit, provided the greatest opportunities for NGOs to play a prominent part in the UNCED event. The simultaneous alternative event, known as the Global Forum was co-ordinated by the **Centre for Our Common Future**. It enabled NGOs to address issues not discussed by governments at the main conference. The Global Forum was a means for NGOs to engage in networking, according to Juniper (1992). However, McCoy and McCully (1993:73) suggest that the Global Forum failed NGOs; it suffered from bad media coverage that focussed on the celebrities and the most unconventional sides of the event.

The Earth Summit itself did not result in a clear political model for communication and action in which international, national or local NGOs might operate effectively. The Summit did present an opportunity for some NGOs to work within a global level of policy-making and work in partnership with national governments. Yet in supporting state-led ideas and in recognising that governments had perhaps 'granted' NGOs more power, many NGOs felt confined to traditional politics. Chatterjee and Finger suggest that this possibly weakened the environmental NGO movement, which:

> ...did not emerge from Rio stronger, but weaker. As a result, it is more fragmented and more disorientated than before...Rio has simple exacerbated this fragmentation (Chatterjee and Finger 1994:54,56).

The UNCED conference is criticised by many writers (McCoy and McCully 1993; Chatterjee and Finger 1994; Doyle and McEachern 1998) for its financial cost and for its bias towards government rather than NGO representation. At a level of extreme cynicism Juniper, as a representative for FoE at Rio, proposes that NGO involvement at Rio may have been specifically engineered for NGOs to share responsibilities for feeble outcomes. Juniper (1992) believes that the relationship developed between NGOs and governments during the Summit process left NGOs in a weaker position and created:

> The erosion of a clear identity for NGOs – based upon grass roots representation and must threaten their ability to stimulate and scrutinise policy making (Juniper 1992:15).

McCoy and McCully (1993:99) similarly illustrate the negative elements of the Summit's attempts at connecting NGOs with governments and corporate actors. These authors observe that such associations placed NGOs in the erroneous position of sharing equal responsibility with governments and international corporations for environmental degradation.

In later processes of implementing the 1992 Summit's outcomes, views of NGO roles are different and usually more optimistic. McCoy and McCully explain the importance of NGOs' in the implementation of **Agenda 21**, as one of Rio's main outcomes. In the form of an 80-page document, Agenda 21 aimed to enable individual nations' governments to achieve Sustainability. NGOs took on an important role in implementation of Agenda 21's 'plans of action' at community level. NGOs' research into Sustainability and liaison with other groups, including the United Nations, continued to place them in a strong position to respond to the Summit. An example is the operation of the Rio Declaration (or 'Earth Charter') Principles 10, 21 and 22, which refer to participation of citizens, youth and communities at all levels. The Principles are heralded to be key niches for NGO work (McCoy and McCully 1993:29). The place of NGOs in global environmental education is discussed further in Chapter 4.

The engagement of NGOs in implementing the Summit's outcomes, particularly Agenda 21, left NGOs in a stronger position than during UNCED itself. In addition, new roles for NGOs also arose from the evolution of the concepts of Biodiversity and Sustainability that are addressed next in section 3.3.

3.3 New themes for NGOs – Biodiversity and Sustainability

3.3.1 Biodiversity

3.3.1.1 The UNCED Biodiversity Convention

For environmental NGOs, two clear impacts of the Rio Summit and preceding global initiatives have been the emergence of the themes of Biodiversity and Sustainability. Biodiversity is defined by UNCED's Biodiversity Convention as:

> ...the variability among living organisms, from all sources including *inter alia* terrestrial, marine and other aquatic ecosystems and the ecological complexes of

> which they are part, this includes diversity within species, between and of ecosystems (cited in HMSO 1994 paragraph 1.11).

Evans (1996:7/8) proposes that the Biodiversity Convention gave a 'moral reason for nature management'. The Convention presented nature conservation NGOs with reason for them to shift from the conservation of 'ecological cleansing' of non-indigenous species towards Biodiversity preservation as a utilitarian means to maintain as many species as possible for the most people. Watson et al (1995:12) reflect upon the utilitarian reliance upon Biodiversity in terms of three types of human use. Firstly, 'direct use' of Biodiversity includes its use for resources such as medicine or fuel; 'indirect use' might include use of the atmosphere or soil fertility; thirdly humans engage in 'passive use' of Biodiversity in perhaps an ethical or aesthetic manner.

3.3.1.2 The scientific concept of Biodiversity

Such viewpoints have become accepted since Biodiversity was discussed at UNCED's 1992 Biodiversity Convention. However, writers have remarked upon the negative semantics of Biodiversity. A most common critique of Biodiversity, as a label for aspects of nature, is that it is overly scientific. In The UK Biodiversity Group's report (UK Biodiversity Group 2001), British people are stated to have an insufficient understanding of Biodiversity; only 27% of the public (a 1060 person sample) understand the term (2001:106). Di Silvestro (1993:23) posits that it is difficult for such scientific nomenclature to have as much impact upon ordinary people as phrases like 'Save the Earth'. Biodiversity, believes Di Silvestro, is both a scientific and esoteric word. Evans (1996:11) similarly finds fault with conservationists' potential over-reliance upon the term Biodiversity as technical categorisation which, although inherently values preservation or conservation of species and their habitats, is associated with order and control. Evans suggests that hidden values within the Biodiversity label may be negative, especially if conservationists avoid learning how to place Biodiversity within ordinary language.

Although Watson et al (1995) consider some of the more varied ways that humans might use and value Biodiversity, both Evans (1996) and Adams (1996) seem concerned that the Biodiversity concept does not omit people's relationships with nature. Adams (1996:50) openly suggests that conservationists' concern with the importance of Biodiversity may result in diversion of money away from other forms of conservation, such as community projects. Indeed, there are implications for investigating just how such community projects may be a valid form of the Biodiversity Convention's goals for countries to:

> ...develop national plans, strategies or programmes for the conservation and sustainable use of Biodiversity (species, genetic resources and ecosystems) (McCoy and McCully 1998:39).

Programmes for conservation of Biodiversity should, according to Watson et al (1995), include an element of raising people's awareness and knowledge. The destruction of Biodiversity is a result of the '...failure of people to consider the long term consequences of their actions, often due to a basic lack of knowledge' (Watson et al 1995:3,45). These authors advocate training a generation of professionals to use Biodiversity sustainably, whilst also disseminating and using Biodiversity knowledge at the local level. A Lancashire public-perception study reported by Macnaghten et

al (1995) mirrors the recommendation from Watson et al, for widening understanding of the concept of Biodiversity. The study also echoes the viewpoints of Di Silvestro, Evans and Adams who are wary of Biodiversity's scientific and exclusive connotations. Macnaghten et al (1995:66) reveal their Lancashire sample to find Biodiversity to be an 'alien and overly scientific term'.

Adoption of the language of Biodiversity by scientists, governments, NGOs and individuals has been much discussed and contested. The notion of Biodiversity that was pioneered by the studies of ecologist E.O.Wilson is alleged to have reached public consciousness. Wilson's idea of Biodiversity was concerned with matters of deforestation, biological data and economic concepts of species-conservation (Evans 10996:27). DiSilvestro (1993:22) also identifies the value of Biodiversity for human lives and economies that depend upon richness of the earth's species, proposing that non-conservationists can understand the worth of Biodiversity, not in economic terms but through enjoyment of habitats for their spiritual and aesthetic benefits. This viewpoint holds significance for conservation NGOs which aim to inform people about Biodiversity.

3.3.1.3 Practical response to the Biodiversity theme

In practical terms, UK Government and NGOs have taken opportunities, first presented at the UNCED Summit, to address both direct Biodiversity conservation and increasing public understanding of the Biodiversity concept. The Department of the Environment (DoE) and Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) meeting for an **Action Plan for Biodiversity** in the UK can be considered to be the primary Government response to UNCED. This culminated in the HMSO document: Biodiversity – The UK Action Plan (BAP) published in January 1994. The document considers not only the goals of the Government but also the roles of NGOs. Of interest to NGOs is Chapter 7 of the Plan, which presents considerable discussion of 'education and partnership'. Voluntary conservation organisations, along with the statutory organisations are named as 'key partners...in sustaining and enriching the UK's Biodiversity' (HMSO 1994:51).

The Plan suggests that action to promote and maintain Biodiversity should occur at the level of: communities; supporting organisations; informal education; formal education and Government. It is suggested that communities are able to involve themselves in activities such as: inventories of local Biodiversity; creation of databases; monitoring changes, reporting and making improvements to local environments (HMSO 1994:111). The Biodiversity Action Plan endorses the establishment of distinctive environmental identities for local communities to enjoy and develop (HMSO 1994:113).

The subject of formal education is addressed at some length in the Biodiversity Action Plan. Formal education is mentioned for its ability to set examples of 'enlightened environmental management', to assist communities in funding and running environmental projects and to teach about issues pertaining to both natural and build environments (HMSO 1994:119). The Plan presents some examples for schools to teach about Biodiversity, for example the arts are cited as a particularly helpful context for pupils' learning. The Biodiversity Action Plan openly acknowledges potential challenges of teaching Biodiversity within a Schools National Curriculum and these challenges may stimulate NGOs to identify where they can assist. For example, the Plan notes the following challenges to the inclusion

of Biodiversity within the National Curriculum: teachers may face pressures from conflicting areas of the Curriculum; Biodiversity and environmental education are not examined; there is need for greater initial teacher training and teachers' professional development and there may be deficiencies in published Biodiversity material suitable for teachers' use.

Further details of NGO involvement in the Action Plan were identified in follow up documents by The UK Biodiversity Steering Group (HMSO 1995) and by the Biodiversity Group's 2001 publication. The first 1995 report accentuated the role of UK government in implementing the plan, whilst clearly playing down the role of NGOs (HMSO 1995:12 para. 1.14). Even though the Steering Group contained NGO representatives as well as those from central and local government, NGOs are only mentioned in the 1995 report as bodies to be encouraged to apply for national and European funds for local Biodiversity Projects (HMSO 1995:94). The UK Biodiversity Group's (2001) report does not identify clear roles for NGO involvement in implementing the UK BAP, but it does state that information and public awareness about Biodiversity is '...central to the implementation of the Biodiversity Action Plan' (UK Biodiversity Group 2001:122). The report also states a need for the UK schools' National Curriculum to develop ways for young people to understand and experience Biodiversity (ibid:108).

In 1993 a group of UK NGOs, headed by the RSPB, responded to the Biodiversity Convention with their own publication: Biodiversity Challenge – An Agenda for Conservation Action in the UK (Wynne et al 1993). This is discussed in the context of The Wildlife Trusts' involvement in section 3.4.2. Section 3.3.1 has presented Biodiversity as a potentially elusive, elite and scientific concept, which is in danger of being misunderstood or overlooked by ordinary people. NGOs are clearly challenged to link Biodiversity loss and preservation to people's everyday lives. Similar challenges exist for NGOs to respond the global theme of Sustainability – discussed next in 3.3.2.

3.3.2 Sustainability

Like the Biodiversity concept, Sustainability or Sustainable Development – used interchangeably in this chapter – is an area of environmental thinking and action that has caught the interest of NGOs. For many NGOs, the theme of Sustainability has been incorporated into their work since the 1992 Summit and before.

The concept of Sustainable Development is most commonly understood to mean '...development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs' (WCED 1987:43). The definition from the 1987 World Commission on Environment and Development's (WCED) Our Common Future publication was preceded by the publication of The World Conservation Strategy (IUCN/UNEP/WWF 1980). The Strategy introduced concepts of Sustainability as ecological, aesthetic, as well as social and economic (O'Riordan 1981:6).

This thesis refers to the notion of Sustainability in terms of ecological Sustainability, in agreement with Hart (1997); it does not aim to discuss Sustainable Development in terms of its many meanings and interpretations. Indeed Kirkby, O'Keefe and Timberlake (1995:1) quote the existence of a 'gallery of definitions' in the work of Pearce et al (1989). There is not space here to repeat the multitude of texts'

arguments or critiques that surround Sustainable Development (Harrison et al 1987; Redclift 1987,1993; and Sachs 1993). Instead, three areas of discussion are presented that recognise the relevance of Sustainability to the work of NGOs. The first examines how the concept of Sustainability transcends its global context and becomes understood as a national and local concept. The second area of discussion considers the difficulty in promoting the idea of Sustainability and how effective NGOs are in aiding public understanding of Sustainability. Thirdly some of the reasons for NGO acceptance of the Sustainability concept are examined – in particular the possibility that Sustainability provides a new focus for conservation NGOs.

3.3.2.1 Sustainability – from global to local

Firstly in addressing the local element of Sustainable Development, Warburton cites several authors who have highlighted the need for local Sustainability. Fagan (in Warburton 1998b) believes that 'localness' should be at the heart of Sustainability. Fagan's chapter entitled Education, Engagement and Sustainabilty, the CADISPA approach details aspects of the Sustainable Development programme known as **CADISPA** or **Conservation and Development in Sparsely Populated Areas**. CADISPA was initiated in Scotland in 1988 as an outcome of the UNCED Summit. A small community such as that in the Scottish CADISPA project is portrayed as a laudable means to amass a sense of belonging and participation amongst its inhabitants, which is a process that Fagan sees as central to achieving Sustainability. Baines is also named in Warburton's (1998b:16) book; Baines advocates rooting the concept of Sustainability with local communities because:

> Most people have an environmental horizon which is very local – the end of the street or the top of the next hill. Sustainability has to make sense at the neighbourhood level, if it is ever to reach global proportions (Baines 1995:45).

The notion of individuals, communities and local people working within processes of Sustainable Development was addressed in a 1994 Government document named Sustainable Development – The UK Strategy (DoE 1994). The document's contributors included a panel of advisors to the Government and a UK Roundtable on the issue of Sustainable Development. One outcome of the UK Strategy was DoE's environmental initiative: **Going for Green**, which aimed to boost the awareness and involvement of UK citizens in the Sustainable Development process. Although the UK Sustainable Development Strategy document did involve a citizens' environment initiative, as a whole it was not well received by environmentalists and those attempting to put the initiatives into action (Bate 1993:60). In particular, the fact that the document appeared fairly soon after the This Common Inheritance document (DoE 1990) was detrimental to environmentalists' positive reception of the Sustainable Development Strategy. Bate declares that governments in general are not equipped to manage Sustainable Development processes; these processes are best dealt with by NGOs. The UK Government disagrees. The online version of the 1999 Government document: 'A Better Quality of Life – A Strategy for Sustainable Development in the UK' (DETR 1999) serves to illustrate.

The 1999 Sustainable Development Strategy clearly indicates that the Government sees itself as best placed to lead UK efforts in the direction of Sustainability. The few references to non-government organisations within The Strategy are written as references towards 'voluntary organisations'. Voluntary organisations are mentioned

regarding: their need to be regulated (para. 5.10); their valuable 'skills and enthusiasm' (para. 7.4) in particular by helping make '...improvements to the places where people live and work, and giving them the chance to play their part in shaping change'. The UK Strategy indicates that Government expects the voluntary conservation movement to support and not override state efforts to promote Sustainability, assist public appreciation of wildlife and draw on '...a long tradition of voluntary scientific effort in the field of wildlife' (para. 8.57). It is interesting to note that no single reference is made to voluntary efforts in the final chapter of the UK Strategy entitled: Chapter 10 Action and Future Reporting.

3.3.2.2 The role of NGOs in promoting Sustainability

The argument that NGOs rather than Government are well placed to address the theme of Sustainability is also addressed in section 3.4.2. The reason why Bate sees NGOs so well placed to address Sustainability is not made clear, but other authors present potential explanations. For example Church (1995) (cited in Warburton 1998b:9) perceives that the local elements of the Sustainable Development process, epitomised in **Local Agenda 21**, require participatory involvement not didactic administration. NGOs' potential to achieve a participatory process is thought to be quite realistic; this process is what Williams (1988:75/76) in Warburton 1998b:14) calls a 'community politics...distinct not only from national politics but from formal local politics'. This notion supports Princen and Fingers' (1994) principle of NGO operation outside traditional and governmental politics.

The research of Macnachten et al (1996) casts doubt upon UK Government's endorsement of the Sustainability concept and may be thought therefore to support NGO involvement. The difficulties for Government groups - national or local - to build up relationships with the UK public can be greater than those that exist for NGOs. Macnaghten et al (1995:9) imply that neither a positive partnership amongst those involved in Agenda 21 as a key promoter of Sustainability, nor the ensuing participation of citizens can be easily achieved without the help of NGOs. It seems that citizens require outside and specifically non-governmental assistance to understand Sustainability as a functional term; indeed Macnaghten's research proposes that:

> As a term 'Sustainability' was recognised by only 2 people [out of 80] in all of the groups and was identified by most groups as jargon, sociological, abstract and a buzzword which politicians might use (Macnaghten et al 1995:45).

Macnaghten's Lancashire based research presents a robust case for NGO promotion of Sustainability to the public. The research is limited as it addresses only one county with a political and cultural character that is unable to represent an entire nation or planet, yet Macnaghten's sample of almost 80 people has a diverse public cross section. The sample was found to be suspicious of governmental or commercial promotion of Sustainability; processes aimed to measure or define indicators of Sustainability were also mistrusted. Additionally, Macnaghten's results indicate Lancashire residents' strong public affection for local places. This fact, coupled with wariness of UK Governmental involvement in Sustainability promotion, seems to present espousal for NGOs, especially local, to take on the public's understandings, misunderstandings and potential to become involved in Sustainable Development.

3.3.2.3 Sustainability as a new focus for environmental NGOs

Environmental discourse questions whether Sustainable Development has become a new focus or drive for environmental NGOs and the conservation movement. Potter and Adams (1993:52) boldly state that the conservation movement may require the idea of Sustainable Development to hold the movement together and act as a common purpose. The authors look upon Sustainable Development as a potential means for better protection of natural resources. However, they also see the need for conservationists to engage in debate about what Sustainable Development will actually do for the countryside. Warburton (1998b) considers Sustainable Development in the context of how people might participate in processes of its implementation and argues that 'Sustainable Development offers a new political ethic' for environmental action requiring a '...political system that secures effective citizen participation in decision-making' (WCED 1987:65 cited in Warburton 1998b:6). Authors such as Princen and Finger might endorse NGOs' search for what Warburton calls a 'new political ethic', or a new theme with which to associate. Doyle and McEachern, however, do not agree that the Sustainability concept is the right theme for NGOs to embrace. They suggest that:

> It should be noted that Sustainable Development is not a radical environmental or green concept, since it accepts the prime need for economic growth and the dominance of human welfare over the needs of the environment; and it conceives the relationship between humans and nature in terms of use of the environment by and for humans (Doyle and McEachern 1998:35).

Indeed, as O'Riordan (1981:7) notes, the World Conservation Strategy (WCS) did introduce the concept of Sustainable Development in terms of sustainable utilisation of resources for improving the well being of people. Hart (1997:5) too, declares that the WCS definition of Sustainable Development focuses upon the 'importance of nature serving human interests'. The more locally-grounded research of Macnachten et al (1996) presents a slightly more optimistic view, proposing that ordinary people may accept Sustainabilty as an environmental term that is associated with human welfare, yet at heart dictated by environmental resources:

> The discourse of Sustainability emphasises the links between basic needs, long term quality of life and short term economic considerations and the need to ensure that human well-being is met only within the finite limits of the planet's (Macnachten et al 1996:9).

The potential motivation for conservationists to explain and achieve processes of ecological Sustainability may require the public to understand it as 'something that should be done about the environment'. Most groups interviewed in Macnachten's study rejected the notion of individual contribution to Sustainability, considering it to relate to the global, rather than local environment (Macnachten et al 1996:45). Fagan (in Warburton 1998b:212) also believes that individuals view Sustainability as equated with 'saving the planet' and with people in positions of authority or influence. However, Fagan maintains that *it is* ordinary people who should be at the centre of Sustainability, and at the local level. Changing public views and encouraging local people to understand their important responsibilities within the Sustainability process, appear to be challenging tasks that face environmental NGOs.

3.4 The Wildlife Trusts as an NGO

This chapter has so far reviewed literature that enables a broad understanding of environmental NGO theory and operations; particulars of The Wildlife Trusts have not yet been discussed. Literature that records the specific place of The Wildlife Trusts as an NGO is limited. However, section 3.4 presents a threefold depiction of The Wildlife Trusts as an environmental NGO with the backdrop of discussion from 3.2 and 3.3. Throughout most of 3.4, The Wildlife Trusts and other contemporary conservation groups or environmental bodies are not referred to as NGOs. Most literature reviewed here either pre-dates or does not use the phrase NGO. Accordingly, the terms conservation and/or environmental body or voluntary environmental body are used.

3.4.1 The Wildlife Trusts' links with Government

Section 3.2 opened with discussion about NGOs as distinct from governments; here section 3.4 begins by illustrating how The Wildlife Trusts have historically maintained very close links with the UK Government. The following account of The Wildlife Trusts' sometimes close and sometimes uneasy relations with UK Government connections prompts uncertainty in classifying The Wildlife Trusts as an NGO, at least according to the notions of either McCoy and McCully (1993) or Princen and Finger (1994).

During the years leading up to 1970, the RSNC was closely connected with national Government's environmental initiatives. Nicholson, as a key figure within the RSNC, was secretary to the first two 'Countryside in 1970' conferences held in 1963 and 1966. These conferences played a major part in Britain's contribution to European Conservation Year (ECY) and in the creation of the Government's Department of the Environment (DoE), in 1970. 1970 marked a new era in which Government and environmental groups took tentative steps to work independently of each other. However, as Lowe points out, although environmental groups would no longer be established in the 'hands of government', the effectiveness of those groups already established was still somewhat determined by Government policy (Lowe 1972:67). For example Lowe and Goyder later demonstrate that some environmental groups were highly dependent upon government funds. The RSNC was found to be one of 23% of environmental groups that depended upon government as the first or second most important source of funding. The government job schemes, especially the Manpower Services Commission (MSC), provided the Trusts with staff until the 1980s. This rendered the RSNC as one of the least autonomous groups of the early eighties (Lowe and Goyder 1983:42).

Bull's (1986) thesis recognises that the County Trusts' relationship with Government agency Nature Conservancy Council (NCC) remained strong in the mid-eighties. His understanding of the relationship during this period was that '...the Trusts might well be regarded as the local arm of the Conservancy' (Bull 1986:237). However the true value of such close links are questionable; it may be that the NCC acted as a buffer to environmental groups so that their lobbying would never reach central Government department (Lowe and Goyders' 1983:67).

If the relationship between RSNC and Government agencies could be considered to lack depth, then the communication between County Trusts and local Government was perhaps more valuable. Bull (1986:239) reports that the Trusts and local

authorities displayed similar objectives in aspects of their work. In the late 1970s Trusts invited local authority members onto their committees and, as well as managing some of the NCC's National Nature Reserves, the Trusts became involved in looking after Local Nature Reserves for local authorities (Bull 1986:61). It was not only in reserve management that Government agencies looked to voluntary bodies for assistance. Both Sheail (1993:60) and Evans (1997:142) suggest that Government was led by nature conservation groups for general guidance in dealing with environmental problems.

The real impetus for conservation writers to examine relationships between UK environmental bodies and Government was the period surrounding the 1991 'split' as NCC became three bodies: English Nature, the Countryside Council for Wales and Scottish Heritage, for England, Wales and Scotland respectively. In Northern Ireland the Environmental Service of the Department of Environment, Northern Ireland, was formed. The details for this split are well documented by Sheail (1993) and Adams (1996), but here it seems important to discuss the significance of this change for the Trusts and other voluntary conservation bodies. Sheail (1993:60) regards the change as '...the most fundamental restructuring of the conservation movement since the war'. This restructuring is debated in terms of the extent to which the split caused the 3 new Government agencies to lose the scientific focus that was so well associated with NCC. Yearly (1991:60) maintains that the RSNC was fearful that the Government agencies would lose the science that was at the heart of the NCC's work. Indeed, the creation of the 3 new agencies signalled the re-emergence and convergence of the wildlife and landscape elements of conservation. This allowed for a revival of conservation's amenity wing, which was later to be affirmed by the 1995 Environment Act (Adams 1996).

The RSNC and other voluntary bodies looked with suspicion upon the whole process leading up to the break up of NCC. The process began with Margaret Thatcher's 1988 address to the Royal Society, entitled Science and the Environment (Thatcher 1988) and was followed by the Government's September 1990 White Paper This Common Inheritance – Britain's Environmental Strategy (DoE 1990). In the heart of the speech and in the White Paper there was some reassurance that scientific objectives remained in the Government's interest. Yet This Common Inheritance precipitated a break in the relationship between RSNC and NCC, just before English Nature was created. The document implied that the state was better placed to deal with objective and scientific land management (Sheail 1993:62). Hill and Jordan (1993:7) convey that voluntary bodies' disappointment in the White Paper process was partly due to the fact that it would act as no guarantee for Treasury decisions to take conservation into account. As Lowe and Goyder (1983) and Bull (1996) identify the Treasury as somewhat impenetrable, Hill and Jordan (1993) also recognise that neither the DoE nor the White Paper process made it any easier for the conservation lobby to influence the heart of Government. The loss of science-led conservation was perhaps not so much of a concern for the RSNC as Government's seizure of conservation processes that were previously in the hands of the voluntary bodies.

After the 1991 split, it could be said that the scientific responsibilities of the three new Government agencies were maintained by the creation of the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) in April 1991. Yet the JNCC was seen as no ally of the voluntary conservation organisations; according to Evans (1997:12) its true purpose was to weaken the conservation lobby. Government could not allow, for

example, English Nature to join with the Countryside Commission in England - the English green movement would be in danger of being too strong (Sheail 1993:12). To the wider countryside movement, the creation of the JNCC was just '...a further example of the 'science argument' hijacking the debate' (Sheail 1993:62). One outcome from these changes during the late 1980s and 1990s was the requirement for the RSNC to assess to what extent it would be concerned with conservation of the wider countryside, leaving aspects of scientific conservation to Government bodies. The RSNC, with other voluntary conservation bodies, had to consider how far it should trust new partnerships with the new agencies.

Ultimately, RSNC's relationships with Government bodies did continue. During the 1990s, UK Government substantially reduced funding for its official environmental bodies (Evans 1997:142). This meant that SSSI's did not receive the attention they deserved, leading to the loss or damage of 6% of SSSIs by 1990. Thus RSNC and the Trusts were given opportunity to continue to take a leading role in reserve management. This theory is supported by Sheail (1993) and Adams (1996), who document conservationists' disappointments with the SSSI process and the subsequent need for RSNC assistance in SSSI management. The Trusts' relationship with Government was strengthened by English Nature's (1993) document, Strategy for the 1990s, which continued developing the NCC's tradition of recommending that voluntary bodies apply for Government funds. This financial link between the Trusts and Government exemplifies Lowe and Goyders' (1983) views about the Trusts' dependency upon Government funds.

An understanding of The Wildlife Trusts' history should be set within the context of more general NGO politics as set out in 3.2.1 and 3.2.2. Firstly, the Trusts' ties with UK government seem to suggest that The Wildlife Trusts do not operate outside state politics within Princen and Finger (1994) post-modern genre of NGOs. However according to the writings of Doyle and McEachern (1998), The Wildlife Trusts do work as an NGO, albeit one that responded to and usually accepted the dominant traditional politics of the Nature Conservation movement. Although the Trusts' acceptance of state politics aligns them to aspects of Third System Theory, historically the Trusts have not been sufficiently focussed upon widening public involvement to fit firmly within this political genre. The Trusts fit more within categories of Pluralist and Political Ecology NGOs. The local and national focus of environmental work that is criticised by Princen and Finger 1994 leads towards questioning the place of The Wildlife Trusts as a global NGO. This subject is discussed next in section 3.4.2.

3.4.2 The Wildlife Trusts as a global NGO

Literature discussing The Wildlife Trusts' involvement in global-level environmental politics or action is not extensive. The Wildlife Trusts' involvement in European level environmental politics is slightly better documented. RSNC's engagement in European levels of policy-making is addressed by Potter and Lobley (1990). During the 1970s the European Environmental Bureau (EEB) became an important channel through which the RSNC and other NGOs could communicate with the European Commission (Potter and Lobley 1990:4). Although it was the larger NGOs which gained more from this process, there was at least an opportunity for UK NGOs, as well as the Countryside Commission and Nature Conservancy to express opinion. Some time later, they were then able to play a part in the development of the 1992 European Directive on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Flora and

Fauna, (known as the Habitat Directive). The Directive meant that the European Commission (EC) was able to respond to the Biodiversity Convention that arose from UNCED in 1992 and new protected sites were designated as Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs). The Wildlife Trusts, in their capacity as nature reserve managers, were therefore involved in this European project.

Ward, Talbot and Lowe (1995) do not refer specifically to The Wildlife Trusts but, in their work concerning environmental agencies in Europe, they indicate the much greater potential for voluntary environmental groups, rather than Government agencies, to engage in European policies:

> ...environmental groups are not so inhibited and the very active lobbyists considered that the European Parliament remains the institution most receptive and friendly to conservation (Ward, Talbot and Lowe 1995:49).

UK environmental groups, and therefore potentially The Wildlife Trusts, are regarded by Ward, Talbot and Lowe (1995) to have opportunities to communicate directly with European policy makers in Brussels instead of taking the traditional route to Government departments through environmental agencies. This seems to suggest that non-statutory conservation bodies such as The Wildlife Trusts are placed in a strong position for involvement in European environmental policy making.

Beyond European initiatives, The Wildlife Trusts have also played some part in global awareness raising programmes. Dwyer and Hodge (1996:99) indicate that the era of the County Trusts' major development was one when 'Nature conservation became an established national and international issue'. Evans (1997:198) states that the RSNC participated in the June 5th World Environment Day in 1984 and the UK Environment weeks of 1985-1988, which included global elements of nature conservation. Comment upon exactly how the Wildlife Trust partnership has addressed the global scale of environmental issues comes from Yearly (1991:59). Yearly suggests that at a conference for education officers in 1987 it was recognised that, although the RSNC had previously been free to explore global issues, the local Trusts should begin to take more of a global perspective.

There is no report of The Wildlife Trust partnership's involvement at the 1992 UNCED conference. However, it could be said the bias of the conference towards Northern Countries signified that some of UNCED's goals were especially relevant for groups such as The Wildlife Trusts as Northern NGOs (Kirkby, O'Keefe and Timberlake 1995:10). UNCED's 1992 Biodiversity Convention, as section 3.3.1 suggests, was to become highly relevant to non-government conservation bodies. The global response to the Convention was the UK Biodiversity Action Plan published in 1994; at this time the NGO sector implemented its intentions to address global Biodiversity issues. In 1993 a partnership of 6 conservation NGOs produced a report: Biodiversity Challenge – An Agenda for Conservation Action in the UK (Wynne et al 1993). The Wildlife Trusts was one of the groups to produce the report, in liaison with Butterfly Conservation, FoE, Plantlife, RSPB and WWF. The document was concerned with measuring gains or loss in UK Biodiversity and it also took on something of a lobbying role, recommending direct government action and change (Adams 1996:49).

The 1995 Report Biodiversity: The UK Steering Group Report. Meeting the Rio Challenge (HMSO 1995) presents examples of clear Wildlife Trust involvement in following through the aims of UNCED. Although this report makes scant reference to NGOs as one body, The Wildlife Trusts are explicitly stated to play an important part in converting the global Biodiversity theme to a local one. For example the Trusts have contributed to and are expected to contribute to Biodiversity recording schemes, both in a scientific role and in a public educational role (HMSO 1995:34;94). The Trusts' educational roles are highlighted in several places throughout the report (ibid:73;96). The Wildlife Trusts and Local Authorities are mentioned in the report, which states that they should:

> Promote neighbourhood nature areas where local people can experience and enjoy nature at first hand. Such areas are one of the most direct means of raising awareness of Biodiversity and involving people in conservation actions. Accessible local nature areas are equally relevant in rural settlements as in towns and cities (HMSO 1995:95).

It seems that the task of making the global issues relevant at *local* community and individual levels is thought most appropriate to The Wildlife Trusts.

The global perspective of The Wildlife Trusts' work is indicated in a minor way in the Trusts' Conservation Plan. The unpublished Plan directs The Trusts' work between 1995 and 2002. It recognises The Wildlife Trusts' place as a global organisation in four parts of the Plan: (i) Programme 3 – 'Agriculture' identifies its performance measures in relation to the European Union (ii) Programme 5 – 'The Marine Environment' identifies its performance measures in relation to water areas established by the International Maritime Organisation (iii) Programme 7 – 'Making Biodiversity relevant to people' aims to encourage a strong natural element in Local Agenda 21 activities and highlights that local activities should contribute to the Local Agenda 21. Programme 7 of the Conservation Plan states that the Trusts:

> ...will work to help people to understand the impacts that modern lifestyles have on wildlife and its habitats locally, nationally and internationally... [the Trusts] will illustrate the importance of thinking globally and acting locally (The Wildlife Trusts 1995b: Programme 7. para.2.7.4).

Hart (1997) discusses how The Wildlife Trusts have taken on board major environmental initiatives' recommendations for linking the global and the local. Hart examines the potential use of the programme that is known as GLOBE (**Global Learning and Observation to Benefit the Environment**). It involves 90 nations monitoring the environment using scientific instruments, personal computers and the Internet. Through 5-11 year olds' monitoring of climate, water, biological and geological aspects of their environment, GLOBE aims to develop children's environmental awareness on a worldwide scale as well as help young people attain improved levels of scientific and mathematical understanding. Such a programme has commendable objectives but possesses the shortcoming of having an unclear *local* element to the work and it is the local emphasis that is most important for young children's environmental education, according to Hart (1997:21).

It is clear that most conservation literature demonstrates that The Wildlife Trust partnership plays a minor part as a *global* environmental NGO; The Trusts are more involved in local than global environmental politics or action. The language and practice of Biodiversity conservation, as a globally founded theme, has undoubtedly

been recognised and adopted by The Trusts. The Conservation Plan's first Programme of work is dedicated to 'Biodiversity Information' – its collection, accessibility and use. Biodiversity is also mentioned within each of the Plan's 10 programmes of work, whilst reference to the global theme of Sustainability is negligible. The August/September 2002 Wildlife Trust Website (The Wildlife Trusts 2002) confirms that The Trusts' do not prioritise Sustainability as a global theme within their work; this is demonstrated by the website's lack of reference to the World Summit on Sustainable Development held in Johannesburg between 26th August and 4th September 2002.

Section 3.4.2 has examined literature reflecting upon The Wildlife Trusts as a global NGO; it has intended to enlarge upon previous sections, where literature was reviewed to examine the global contexts and levels of wider NGO operations. The following section further develops 3.2.3 where NGOs' characteristics and influences upon their success were discussed in universal NGO terms. Next, by discussing The Wildlife Trusts and other NGOs, the Trusts are considered in terms of their characteristics and the influences upon their successes.

3.4.3 The Wildlife Trusts and other NGOs

The following section provides another context for understanding The Wildlife Trusts as an NGO. Much literature concerning the Trusts has concentrated upon defining and labelling individual County Trusts and their activities or comparing and categorising the Trusts with their counterpart UK NGOs.

At this point the reader is reminded that terms such as environmental 'groups' and 'bodies' are more often used here in section 3.4.3. These terms are used in place of the label NGO. Even though many groups are classifiable as NGOs, the literature reviewed here employs the more common labels: 'groups' and 'bodies', as be-fitted the period before UNCED when 'NGO' was rarely used to describe environmental and conservation bodies.

The 1970s environmental movement in the UK fell into what Lowe and Goyder (1983:344) term the 'Popular/Political Period'. During this time, voluntary bodies grew in size and number, causing increased competition for funds and support. The significance of this rise in environmental groups has been explored through key pieces of 1980s and 1990s research and discussion. This research focussed on exploring the characteristics of voluntary environmental bodies – including The Wildlife Trusts – attempting to define and compare them against a variety of criteria such as: their membership; the nature of their public support; their historical origins and goals; internal organisation; political influence and the potential overlap between their work. A synopsis of the research and literature concerned with comparing and classifying environmental groups is presented in Figure 1 that follows on page 52. The value of such literature is in aiding understanding of environmental groups' abilities to work within clearly defined niches and/or in partnership with each other for the accomplishment of effective conservation and education objectives. Literature within this figure is referred to throughout section 3.4.3.

Figure 1 Literature concerned with classification of environmental bodies

Author and date[4]	Empirical/Theoretical	NGOs discussed	Criteria for classifications and/or descriptions
Lowe 1972 *	Empirical	NT, FoE	'established' 'new'
Lowe & Goyder 1983	Empirical	FoE, NT, RSNC, The Henley Society, European Environmental Bureau & Others	'pressure group' 'emphasis group' aims, membership, income, staff expertise, internal decision-making, autonomy, organisational effectiveness
Bull 1986 *	Empirical	Wildlife Trusts. Focus on: Bedford & Huntingdonshire, North Wales, Yorkshire Trusts.	Membership characteristics & 'national recruitment profile'
Micklewright 1986 *	Empirical	London Wildlife Trust Avon Wildlife Trust	Membership characteristics of 'new urban' & 'old rural'
Juniper 1988 *	Empirical	London Wildlife Trust	Membership characteristics, Trust's marketable qualities
Juniper 1989	Empirical	London Wildlife Trust, Wildlife Trusts	Membership characteristics
Barkham 1989	Theoretical	RSNC & Wildlife Trusts	Internal organisation
Yearly 1991	Theoretical	RSNC, RSPB, Greenpeace	History, activities, focus, environmental problems as social problems
Micklewright 1993	Empirical	Avon Wildlife Trust, BTCV,Bristol Avon Groundwork Trust	Activities, especially sites work, education, campaigning
Dwyer & Hodge 1996	Empirical	Wildlife Trusts, RSPB, National Trust & others	'CARTS' (Conservation, Amenity & Recreation Trusts) Objectives, size, finances, staff employed, membership, activities
Adams 1996	Theoretical	Wildlife Trusts, RSPB, WWF, Greenpeace, FoE, CPRE	Membership
Evans 1997	Theoretcial	Wildlife Trusts, RSPB, National Trust, WWF, FoE, CPRE	Membership 'old' or 'new'
Doyle and McEachern 1998	Theoretical	Green NGOs, North, South & E.Europe incl. Greenpeace, FoE and EarthFirst	Place of origin, political ideology, size, political level (eg global, national, local), funding, activities

The discussion of literature that follows is organised into four subsections arising from research in Figure 1 as well as the conservation writing of: Smith (1990); Potter and Adams (1993); McNeely (1997) and Sheail (1998). The first three subsections discuss approaches used to compare environmental groups. Section 3.4.3.1 begins by addressing the distinction between 'old' and 'new' environmental groups.

3.4.3.1 Old and new environmental groups

One of the first approaches to analysing the significance of the increase of environmental bodies was initiated by Lowe (1972). He sought to identify characteristics of established and newer groups, primarily through comparison of two groups – the National Trust and Friends of the Earth (FoE). Lowe intended the comparison to illustrate the breadth of the environmental movement and to

[4] Unpublished theses and dissertations are marked by *

demonstrate major changes in environmental politics of the time. As Lowe concentrated upon only two groups, his thesis may not be effective in constructing broad generalisations of other groups' characteristics. Nevertheless his choice of groups is representative of environmental groups that developed under quite different historical and political circumstances and the similarities between the historical origins of the National Trust and The Wildlife Trusts make Lowe's classifications relevant to this study. A principal feature of Lowe's thesis is his recognition of the strengths of the new environmental groups' efforts in public communication.

Established in America in 1969, FoE was brought to the UK in 1971 and reached Scotland some eight years later. As a new environmental group, FoE is quoted by Evans (1997:105) to have a central aim to 'transform society'. One feature, which characterises it as different from a body such as the National Trust, is its focus on targeting public awareness. Immediately from its inception, the UK FoE worked as a public-orientated campaigning group, which Lowe (1972:50) describes as a '...learning system for the dissemination of social change therefore the emphasis is on participation, its structure is decentralised to increase participation'. Lowe's thesis points out that by contrast the National Trust, as an established group, spends relatively little of its resources on informing public opinion. This identifies the National Trust as similar to The Wildlife Trusts, as portrayed in Chapter 2 sections 2.2.3 and 2.2.6. Evans (1997) suggests that this passivity was instrumental in new pressure groups seeking to take an approach quite independent from that of established groups. He praises the different approach of new environmental bodies that formed in the sixties and seventies, suggesting that:

> The new conservationists, using more extravagant tactics to tackle wider environmental issues, were dissolving public indifference and official inertia in a much more positive fashion. Certainly it is them and not the nature conservationists who are remembered in hindsight from the 1960s (Evans 1997:119).

Evans (1997) questions whether it was advantageous for established conservation bodies to maintain separation from the new groups, positing that it may have enabled the old groups to maintain their particular niches and appeal to different public groups. Conversely, opportunities for learning the communication and publicity techniques of the newer groups may have been lost.

Overall, Lowe is able to illustrate that there is merit in examining the differences between old and new groups. Firstly, he demonstrates that a key determinant of a voluntary body's style of communication is the historical period during which the body was formed. Secondly, Lowe defines and categorises environmental groups, which enables an understanding of their purposes and effectiveness in communication with people. The next section addresses a common form of categorisation, namely membership.

3.4.3.2 Comparison of groups according to membership

A reading of the fourth column of Figure 1 (page 52) demonstrates that there are numerous criteria for classifying and comparing environmental bodies, one of which is an environmental body's membership. Membership is considered an important criterion by a number of authors for a variety of reasons. To begin with, environmental groups' membership figures were viewed as comparable measures of the groups' growth in size and public support (Lowe and Goyder 1983; Adams 1996;

Evans 1997; Barkham 1989). Figure 2 that follows tabulates membership figures for The Wildlife Trusts and UK environmental groups from 1960 onwards, when the real rise in environmental groups began. The environmental groups in the table are those whose membership figures have been compared by Lowe and Goyder (1983), Adams (1996), Evans (1997) and Barkham (1989). The groups also coincide with 8 of Micklewright's (1993:325) 10 'key groups' of the 1990s' voluntary conservation movement.

Figure 2 Membership figures for UK conservation groups 1960-2000

	National Trust	RSPB	Wildlife Trusts	Greenpeace	FoE	WWF	Woodland Trust	CPRE
1960	-	10 000	3 000	-	-	Est. 1961	-	-
1965	-	30 000	21 000	-	-	-	-	6 000
1971	278 000	98 000	64 000	-	Est.1971	12 00	Est.1972	21 000
1981	1046 000	441 000	143 000	Est 1977	18 000	60 000	20 000	29 000
1988	1600 000	540 000	204 000	227 000	23 000	-	-	46 000
1990	2032 000	844 000	250 000	-	110 000	247 000	66 000	44 000
1995	2323 000	890 000	252 000	215 000	200 000	200 000	62 000	45 000
2000	2650 000	1400 000	325 000	176 000	154 800	255 000	67 000	53 800

Source: Lowe and Goyder (1983:48), Adams (1996:24), Evans (1997:197), Barkham (1989:14) and the organisations themselves.

Figure 2 (page 54) shows that it has been the older, established groups that have enjoyed the greatest and most consistent membership growth. The membership of the National Trust doubled over the 1980s, as did that of the RSPB. Memberships for both these traditional groups continued to rise through the 1990s. The most likely reason behind this is that established groups have had more of a chance to build such memberships; as Lowe and Goyder (1983:38) suggest, '...it simply takes time to harness support and to build up an organisation capable of engendering further support'. During the 1990s, the membership figures for all remaining groups shown in Figure 2, increased at a much slower rate and, for some groups such as Greenpeace, Friends of the Earth, WWF and the Woodlands Trust, membership figures actually fell. The membership of The Wildlife Trusts continued to grow during the 1980s and 1990s, but at a much slower pace than for the National Trust or RSPB.

In addition to comparison of environmental groups' membership figures, factors affecting memberships of individual bodies have also been considered, in both theoretical contexts and in specific research examining The Wildlife Trusts. The work of a number of authors enables suppositions to be made about the influences upon The Wildlife Trusts' membership growth and decline. Yearly (1991:60) for example suggests that the period of the Trusts' slower growth was partly due to reduced assistance from Government labour schemes, (such as the Manpower Services or MSC scheme) which until then, had been very valuable in providing volunteer members for the Trusts. Dwyer and Hodge (1996:129) also cite this problem as a particular obstacle for the Trusts. Another potential cause for membership decline is alluded to in their 1990-1992 surveys documented by Dwyer and Hodge (1996). They suggest that The Wildlife Trusts believed generation of long-term funds to be their principal problem, whilst declining membership was viewed as a relatively small concern. This may indicate two things: firstly gaining

secure finances for staff posts and reserve acquisition may have been prioritised over attempts to increase membership figures. Secondly, staff in Dwyer and Hodges' survey may have neglected to view increase in membership numbers as a means for alleviating funding problems, even though staff recognised that membership subscriptions form the second largest source of operational income after grants (Dwyer and Hodge 1996:121).

Another factor to influence The Wildlife Trusts' slower membership growth may have been the very process that aimed to increase public support, namely the Trusts' efforts to present themselves as an integrated body with unified image. This process began with the 1976 adoption of the badger logo and the subsequent moves to present an integrated image of RSNC and the County Trusts as The Wildlife Trust partnership. Bull (1986:243) reports that some Trusts found it difficult to engage in such attempts at synchronisation and Potter and Adams (1993:50) refer to the process as '...the astonishingly intense and often bitter debate over RSNC's revised name and corporate image'. This difficult period of The Wildlife Trusts' development is affirmed by Yearly's (1991:58) reference to inter-trust tension and competition. Barkham's (1989:14) report of RSNC's preference for supporting rural Trusts rather than urban Trusts may also be interpreted as an obstacle to the Trusts' unity. It is inferred that time and resources spent upon these elements of The Wildlife Trusts' organisation hampered their membership recruitment efforts during the 1980s and 1990s.

Bull's (1986) thesis suggests that factors affecting Wildlife Trust membership should also be examined at the level of individual Trusts. Bull's research notes that, by looking at a Trust's membership as a percentage of its county's whole population, the high membership growth of some Trusts may be attributed to higher-than-average population increase in the local area. Bull believes that individual Trust membership growth is also shaped by the agricultural impact experienced by the 'host-county'. For example, a rise in Suffolk Wildlife Trust's membership is linked to both an increase in local population, and increased agriculture throughout Suffolk (Bull 1986:290).

It is evident that the relationship between membership growth and influential factors is more complex than a cause-effect connection between one or two variables. In addition to Bull (1986), other authors have discussed a variety of influences upon membership growth (Lowe and Goyder 1983, Juniper 1989 and Dwyer and Hodge 1996). Lowe and Goyder offer reasons why membership support might vary from one environmental group to another. A summary of these reasons is provided in the following list:

- Effort put into gaining support
- Time it takes to gain support
- Incentives offered to potential members
- Extent to which people need to register their support
- Desire for potential members to be involved, e.g. as a volunteer
- Opportunities provided for social contact amongst members
- Opportunities for members to have influence

(Adapted from Lowe and Goyder 1983:337-341)

Such factors suggest that a voluntary body, and indeed NGO, has considerable control over its membership growth. For example it may decide what proportion of its resources to use for membership recruitment. The body does have a lesser influence upon the extent to which the public will *register its support*, through campaigning, publicity and other forms of education. Bull's research demonstrates that The Wildlife Trusts failed to address at least one of Lowe and Goyders' factors affecting membership, namely the provision of opportunities for members to have influence. As was the case in the early days of the SPNR and the Trusts, Bull finds that the 1970s and 1980s Trust members received few opportunities to influence decision-making. Studies of preferences and characteristics of environmental group members include those by Bull (1986), Micklewright (1986) and Juniper (1988), who aim to understand what sort of people might join environmental organisations and why. (These studies have been discussed in section 2.3.3. Understanding Members and Volunteers).

There are a number of challenges to the literature that supports the use of membership size as a suitable gauge for the growth or success of either individual organisations or the UK environmental movement. For instance, Bull (1986) reveals that an holistic view of the Trusts' collective or individual growth may not be represented by membership growth alone. Bull suggests that other indicators of Trusts' growth during the 1970s include: the increase in numbers of Trust wardens; the rise in the number of the Trust-owned and managed reserves and the substantial rise in the Trusts' average income (see Bull 1986:59 for SNPC 1978 figures). However, Dwyer and Hodge contest the use of income as an indicator of growth for a non-profit organisation; neither its achievement of purely conservation-orientated goals nor its success in raising public support should be judged financially (Dwyer and Hodge 1986:244). Dwyer and Hodges' argument also extends to the use of membership figures, which might only measure a voluntary body's success in advertising or publicity.

There is additional opposition to literature that overstates the significance of a voluntary body's membership. Firstly, membership figures signify nothing of an organisation's breadth of support amongst a variety of social groups. The research of Bull (1986) and Juniper (1989) both illustrate that membership of The Wildlife Trusts is mainly held by white middle class people. Secondly, membership figures alone are not effective in reflecting the growth of an environmental movement. As is pointed out by Lowe and Goyder (1983:37) and Bull (1986:293), people are often members of two or more environmental groups at one time, thus membership figures are 'recycled' from group to group.

One final issue regarding membership is whether membership figures can be compared between groups that are so different. Perhaps the membership of The Wildlife Trusts, made up of many local groups, should not be compared with those of national groups. Yearly offers one view on this matter:

> While Greenpeace, Friends of the Earth and RSPB and other national groups can organise national recruiting campaigns, it is harder for a federation of Wildlife Trusts, part of whose appeal is in their 'regional character' Yearly (1991:58).

Barkham (1989:12) takes a similar line of argument. He identifies RSNC or The Wildlife Trusts as an umbrella organisation for smaller groups and therefore quite different from other organisations, such as the RSPB or the National Trust. Barkham

also questions the Trusts' ability to have a national impact in gaining people's support.

With the exception of Micklewright (1993), the authors mentioned in section 3.4.3.2 have overlooked the fact that groups may be incomparable on the basis of membership alone because they have either low or no memberships. Examples include The Groundwork Trusts and BTCV. Further discussion concerning these groups is not presented here but may be found in the work of Dwyer and Hodge (1996), Evans (1997) and Juniper (1998). One significant point arising from Juniper's (1998) findings is the fact that BTCV is thought to be in a position to gain support from potential Wildlife Trust members. Juniper's findings reveal that involvement through volunteering (as with BTCV) is perceived by potential Wildlife Trust members to be preferable to involvement through passive membership.

The next subsection deals with classification of environmental bodies beyond the criterion of membership. The subsection discusses efforts to classify groups according to activities undertaken by the groups; their conformity or opposition to societal values; their involvement in land management and their size and public influence.

3.4.3.3 Towards a taxonomy of environmental groups

Various authors present effective arguments for the classification of conservation groups according to criteria other than for how long the groups have existed or the size of the group's memberships. These authors are listed in Figure 1 (page 52). Micklewright (1993), through research into local conservation groups, finds that the groups collectively undertake a wide range of activities. There is a substantial overlap between activities, which may be 'diluting' the effectiveness of the conservation movement (Micklewright 1993:328). Dwyer and Hodge (1996:244) assert a different rationale for taxonomy of environmental groups by noting that competition for donations, membership, public sector funds and consultancy work presents a need for groups to identify their key characteristics and decide where their priorities lie. Doyle and McEacherns' (1998:87-90) classification is set in a global and highly political context and is justified by Princen and Fingers' (1994) perceived need for 'a new form of politics' to deal with global environmental problems. Only one of Doyle and McEacherns' eight factors, which determine differences between environmental groups or more specifically NGOs, relates to their activities or what they actually do. The remaining criteria, with the exception of NGO size, are all linked with their political origins, focus and structure. Thus there seem to be good grounds for classifying environmental groups according to their political ideals and mode of operation and according to the groups' priority activities and strengths. Such classification may help them decide what functions should be at the heart of their own work and what should be left to their competitors.

After Lowe wrote his (1972) thesis, his work with Goyder (1983) marked the first clear attempt to codify roles for environmental bodies. Lowe and Goyder present discussion vis-à-vis the origin of environmental groups according to their aims, membership, income, staff-experience, internal decision-making and organisational effectiveness. In addition, Lowe and Goyder suggest another form of classification, which advances Lowe's original distinction between 'established' and 'new' groups.

Lowe and Goyder (1983:61) present two types of group: the 'emphasis group' and the 'promotional group'. They place RSNC and Wildlife Trusts into the category of 'emphasis' group, which is defined by a 'watchdog' role with '...aims which do not conflict in any clear-cut way with widely held social goals or values' (Lowe and Goyder 1983:35). Smith (1990:14) confirms this notion that the RSNC and Trusts work in co-operation with decision-makers rather than confrontation. However, the role of the RSNC began, as its original name signifies - Society for the Promotion of Nature Reserves - as a 'promotional' group. This involved the Society working to 'promote causes involving social or political reform' (Lowe and Goyder 1983:35).

Perhaps the most valuable aspect of such classification is in illustrating that The Wildlife Trusts have undergone a clear change of role in the past and may have to continue re-questioning their role as either emphasis or promotional group. Micklewright (1993:331) notes that The RSNC undertook more campaigning and lobbying during the 1990s. However, Micklewright recognises that the shift of RSNC towards more 'promotional' activities has occurred without either clear objectives or an organisational structure that enables local Trusts to participate in fully in national campaigns.

It seems that, with the rise in popularity of new 'promotionally' orientated environmental bodies, The Wildlife Trusts partnership has taken on some of the campaigning activities usually associated with groups such as Greenpeace and FoE, who have always set out to influence decision makers and influence people. Yearly (1991:60) claims that the RSNC in the past competed directly with FoE. For example, they simultaneously launched Peatland campaigns in 1990. Yearly also purports that the RSNC and Wildlife Trusts *should* be competing with high profile campaigning groups, such as FoE and Greenpeace. However, traditionally land-owning groups have had little experience in exercising campaigns, except for those campaigns thought to directly relate to wildlife and land management (Dwyer and Hodge 1996:211; see also Adams 1996:60).

Dwyer and Hodges' (1996) mode of classifying environmental bodies concentrates upon environmental bodies with land owning and managing capacities. The Wildlife Trusts are defined as CARTS (Conservation, Amenity and Recreation Trusts) that are:

> (a) largely 'non-profit' or charitable organisations (mainly trusts) that aim to generate wide public benefits through nature conservation or environmental improvement
>
> and/or (b) the provision of amenity and opportunities for public recreation
>
> and/or (c) the conservation of landscape heritage
>
> and that (d) own, lease or have long term management responsibility for open land (not only buildings) on which the aims are pursued.
>
> (Dwyer and Hodge 1996:ix-x).

Specifically, The Wildlife Trusts as one of four types of CART are termed 'Primary Conservation CARTS', which have conservation at the heart of their work. Dwyer and Hodges' work shows that, with the exception of the RSPB, all CARTS are seen to have a local role and undertake local initiatives.

Through a survey of a wide number and range of CARTS, undertaken between 1990 and 1992, Dwyer and Hodge aimed to record the work of these groups and understand their contributions to rural conservation. In doing this, Dwyer and Hodge adopt a perhaps traditional and narrow view of conservation. Whilst CARTS' contribution to rural conservation is focussed upon, urban conservation is somewhat ignored even though some of the CARTS in Dwyer and Hodges' study contribute substantially to the quality of the urban environment. Indeed, Dwyer and Hodge do acknowledge that many Wildlife Trusts, over the 1990-1992 period, were involved in urban as well as rural programmes of work.

The most valuable aspect of Dwyer and Hodges' work for this study is their Wildlife Trust 'typologies'. Dwyer and Hodge use the notion of Trust growth as the central tenet for their taxonomy of Trusts. Trusts' annual income and number of professional staff are used as deciding factors for determining a Trust 'type' (Dwyer and Hodge 1996:109-110). Three typologies are presented: 'the small group', 'the developing and campaigning group' and the 'nationally influential group'. One particular problem with the third typology is that Dwyer and Hodge do not necessarily demonstrate that the group *will* have national influence, only that its activities aim to have national influence. The implication behind Dwyer and Hodges' Trust classification is that Trusts might work towards becoming 'type 3' Trusts with national influence and secure financial bases. This would then allow Trusts greater scope for future planning and consolidation of best practice.

The typologies include an outline of some of the activities that each might carry out. The following Figure 3 is an interpretation of Dwyer and Hodges' typologies presenting the activities, which can all be labelled as broadly educational. Additional information is also provided to demonstrate other criteria used by Dwyer and Hodge in their classification of Trusts:

Figure 3 Characteristics of individual Wildlife Trust within 3 Typologies

	Type 1 The Small Group	**Type 2 The Developing/ Campaigning Group**	**Type 3 The Nationally Influential Group**
People work and/or educational activities.	'Baseline' activities e.g.: Watch group, Members' newsletter, Annual programme of social and fundraising events.	Addressing planning applications, Volunteer programmes, Community group work on reserves, Some environmental consultancy work, Use of local media.	National Campaigning, Work with national and local authorities, Work with land owners, Public enquiries, Use of local and national media, Consolidation of activities.
Number of members	<3000	Not stated	Not stated
Reserve income	£10-60k	£61-200k	£200-700k
Number of professional staff	<5	5-12	>15
Number of Trusts	10-13	23	10

Adapted from Dwyer and Hodge (1996:109-110)

Dwyer and Hodge (1996:108) identify an additional Trust characteristic, namely the balance which Trusts strike between direct conservation through land management

and indirect conservation through campaigning and activities aimed to influence a wider public. Dwyer and Hodge suggest that this balance is determined by individual Trusts and is independent of other characteristics. However, the RSNC Corporate Strategy for 1989-1992 shows that, at the time of Dwyer and Hodges' survey, all Trusts were persuaded to take on activities aimed at influencing people. The Strategy encouraged the Trusts to:

achieve a better future for wildlife by:

> protecting and enhancing wildlife and wildlife habitats, both common and rare, as an investment for the future;
>
> creating a greater appreciation and understanding of wildlife and wildlife habitats and a greater awareness of the need for their conservation;
>
> encouraged active participation by people of all ages;
>
> providing more opportunities for all to enjoy wildlife and wild places in towns and countryside;
>
> infusing the philosophy and practice of nature conservation into all uses of the environment and natural resources;
>
> (RSNC Corporate Strategy 1989-1992 cited in Dywer and Hodge (1996:103)

Such strategy demonstrates that four out of five goals are aimed at advancing the Trusts' efforts to gain public interest, whilst only the first goal relates to direct conservation. Comparison between the 1989-1992 aims and those set out by the SPNC in 1976, shows how the balance between pure conservation and conservation through communication has altered over between 1976 and 1989. The 1976 strategy guided the Trust to:

> establish nature reserves to safeguard habitats to provide 'reservoirs' for rare species;
>
> disseminate information to local authorities, landowners and others concerned in countryside management;
>
> promote the conservation of nature for study and research and to educate the public in the understanding and appreciation of nature, the awareness of its value and the need for its conservation.
>
> (SPNC 1976 cited in Evans 1997:124)

Although the strategic aims have changed over time, Dwyer and Hodges' findings illustrate that the Trusts' complete acceptance of change is questionable. That is to say, the Trusts direct their own paths in terms of upon what they choose to focus.

Barkham (1989:15) appears to have misgivings regarding this aspect of the Trusts' independence, particularly if they are to influence the public at a national level. He specifies that this issue should be addressed by RSNC, as the Trusts' coordinating body, who ought to take the lead in placing local conservation issues in a national context. In order to do this, Barkham advocates that RSNC must enable Trusts to share ideas and experiences, make use of grants, advice, resource provision and training provided by RSNC. Barkham acknowledges these tasks to be difficult when RSNC itself has a low public profile and is under-staffed. It seems that, in order to fit appropriately into Lowe and Goyders' 'emphasis' or 'promotional' categories, to achieve Barkham's objectives or work towards Dwyer and Hodge's typology of 'the nationally influential group', the Trusts and RSNC are dependent upon becoming

more widely known to people. Thus they must make decisions about how to address this matter most effectively. The next subsection considers what might influence their decisions.

3.4.3.4 Influences upon environmental bodies' work with people

This final subsection here in 3.4.3 addresses dominant influences upon environmental groups' efforts to gain public interest. Micklewright (1993) discusses the local effectiveness of 10 UK environmental bodies. Micklewright (1993:327) uses local press cuttings, discussion with 'key people' and newsletters to determine what activities are undertaken by 3 local environmental groups in the south west of England: the Avon Wildlife Trust, BTCV and Bristol Avon Groundwork Trust. A significant element of Micklewright's findings is the overlap between the groups' activities. For instance, at least 2 out of the 3 groups carry out activities in the list that follows:

- Setting up nature reserves/sites
- Direct management activities
- Volunteer work parties
- Assisting local communities
- School grounds projects
- Popularising wildlife
- Working with business communities
- Consultancy
- Working with local authorities
- Advice to landowners
- Training of unemployed

Adapted from Micklewright in Goldsmith and Warren (1993:327)

Micklewright points out that such overlap of activity occurs at a national as well as local scale, confirming a need for greater communication between groups in order to avoid duplication of activities and potential waste of resources amongst bodies.

Some successful communication and partnership between UK environmental bodies has occurred through the work of Wildlife Link. CoEnCo established this body in 1979 under the leadership of Lord Melchett. The voluntary bodies co-ordinated by Wildlife Link included both the established and newer groups of the conservation movement. One notable achievement for Wildlife Link was in enabling groups, including RSPB, RSNC, WWF, FoE and Greenpeace, to have a voice in the political process of forming the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (Evans 1997:165). Barkham (1989:12) comments on the necessity for such partnership and co-ordination: 'Without Wildlife Link, I wonder whether the voluntary conservation movement would be presenting anything coherent at all'.

The work of Wildlife Link, which later became Wildlife and Countryside Link, was augmented by Rural Action's endeavours in the creation of NGO/Government partnerships from 1992 onwards. Nevertheless the functions of these partnership organisations, Wildlife Link in particular, were more focussed on political aims rather than generating wide public concern for the environment. Failure to accrue public support for a cohesive environmental movement, exemplified by the 1990s

drop in membership figures for many environmental bodies, may be connected to lack of effective communication and partnership between bodies. Robert Worcester, Chair of a MORI public opinion poll for FoE illustrates this point. He suggests that '...many of the organisations appear to compete, not complement' (cited in Evans 1997:204).

An additional influence upon environmental groups' public support is their ability to present themselves with clear functions (Evans 1997:251). This is emphasised by Smith (1990) who suggests that in light of increased competition within the voluntary movement, The Wildlife Trusts' future success '...will depend increasingly on the demonstration of a distinctive, understandable and relevant function' (Smith 1990:16).

If environmental groups' successful work with people is attributable to their effective organisation then this, in turn, is linked with the personalities who work within them. A number of authors, including Lowe and Goyder (1983), Dwyer and Hodge (1996) and Barkham (1989) link environmental groups' past successes with the work of particular individuals who have been able to provide positive leadership. Just as key figures played an important part in the creation and advancement of the SPNR and SPNC, The Wildlife Trusts are believed to continue to rely upon individual personalities. Barkham (1989:16) strongly states that where the RSNC has successfully represented and co-ordinated the Trusts, these instances are largely dependent upon individual Trust representatives on RSNC Council. Barkham suggests that for individual Trusts too, their progress relies upon the influence of positive personalities:

> ...variability in Trust performance is principally to do with individuals. One individual with exceptional vision and competence, whether volunteer or paid employment can transform a small organisation (Barkham 1989:18).

3.5 Summary of Chapter 3

This chapter has reviewed literature for the purpose of providing a greater understanding of NGOs and also for an appreciation of The Wildlife Trusts' potential position as an NGO. To some extent The Wildlife Trusts' status as an NGO, its connections with Government and with other environmental organisations may have impact upon its delivery of environmental education, which are summarised as follows:

- The literature reviewed emphasises that NGOs are not just *non-governmental* organisations whose autonomous status is part is part of their very definition. UNCED highlighted NGOs as diverse organisations; there is a confirmed level of diversity across and within the many environmental NGOs that exist and indeed within The Wildlife Trusts. Like other NGOs, The Wildlife Trusts' success may be hampered or furthered by its internal diversity, its organisation, local emphasis and longevity.

- The Wildlife Trusts is an unusual environmental organisation in that it has historically worked particularly closely with Government, experiencing a relationship of profits and difficulties that ultimately question The Wildlife Trusts' actual or desired status as an NGO.

- Literature concerning The Wildlife Trusts' potential to function as a global NGO defines the organisation as one that can operate within the spheres of European conservation initiatives, but more particularly by focussing on global issues at a *local* level.

- Recent themes of Biodiversity and Sustainability became relevant for NGOs as matters of global importance and as new terms for environmentalists. The Wildlife Trusts' response to the 1992 UNCED Biodiversity Convention via a jointly published NGO publication (Wynne et al 1994) gave the Trusts potential to take on the challenges of translating the science language of Biodiversity to the public with the adjectival Biodiversity education. The Trusts' potential for Sustainability education may be considered to be local interpretation of a global theme, yet the tension presented by governmental advocacy of an anthropocentric and insufficiently radical kind of Sustainability may render the theme inappropriate as a key area of Wildlife Trust education work.

- Literature concerning UK NGOs that proliferated during the 1960s and 1970s undertook to compare and classify them according to criteria such as age, goals and membership. Environmental groups potentially compete with rather than collaborate with The Wildlife Trusts in communicating with people on matters of conservation and the wider environment; similarly, individual Trusts compete with each other. A clearer knowledge of the influence of other NGOs' activities at national and local levels may considerably reduce wasted resources needed for Wildlife Trust educational activities. Potentially, The Wildlife Trusts would benefit from working as part of a coherent conservation movement. Coordinating bodies can be useful to lead NGOs to communicate with each other and work in partnership where appropriate (Barkham 1989; Evans 1997). Key conservation writers have encouraged The Wildlife Trusts to present themselves as one articulate body with clear functions.

- Public support for The Wildlife Trusts, demonstrated through membership figures, has in the past dwindled as a result of various factors including: problems in creating a unified Wildlife Trust image, inter-Trust competition, over-dependency upon Government financial support and over-concentration upon fund generation. Such circumstances of the past are surely important for understanding the challenges facing Wildlife Trust education practice during the period of this study's data collection. However, for this thesis, previous authors' enthusiasm for comparing membership figures across NGOs is posited to be less useful than deeper analysis of factors that encourage membership and how membership processes may educate the public both at recruitment state and later on.

Chapter 4's literature review that follows addresses the potential processes and goals of environmental education in more depth, as understanding and approaches to environmental education are examined in an account of initiatives, publications, organisations and academic environmental education research that have relevance for The Wildlife Trusts.

Chapter 4 Environmental education: development of understanding and approaches

4.1 Overview of Chapter 4

This chapter focuses upon the development of environmental education by reviewing three areas of diverse but significant literature. The sections of this chapter are organised to present a chronological and thematic understanding of some of the major impacts upon environmental education practice in both formal and informal settings.

Section 4.2 is entitled '**The influence of initiatives, publications and organisations**'. It presents a brief historical and critical account of major global and national initiatives that have offered discourse and direction for environmental education theory and practice since the mid 1960s. The key publications arising from the initiatives and other dialogues are also reviewed. Reference is made to the most significant subject matter and that which recurs throughout the discussed environmental symposia, initiatives and publications.

Section 4.3, headed '**The influence of environmental education research**' is firstly an account of changes and trends in environmental education research. Secondly, the section provides a comprehensive review of studies that discuss people's relationship with the environment. Such a relationship comprises elements of people's knowledge regarding the environment and/or their attitudes and behaviour towards it. Further exploration of the development of the people-environment relationship is presented in terms of development of a 'pro-environmental disposition' (PED). The term PED is introduced by the author of this thesis to refer to an individual's or a group's possession of any of the following: positive environmental knowledge, attitude, concerns, sensitivity and/or behaviour.

Section 4.4 is entitled **Linking environmental education initiatives and research practice.** It reflects on the previous sections in Chapter 4 and incorporates reference to additional literature concerned with Wildlife Trust and NGO practice of environmental education. This section illustrates that amid concurrent development of research and proposed practice - as advocated by major environmental education initiatives and publications - there exist principal parallels and anomalies between them. Additionally, the implications of initiatives and research for The Wildlife Trusts and other NGOs are examined. Finally, further challenges for NGOs' delivery of environmental education are presented. Responses or solutions to these challenges are discussed - in particular NGOs' engagement in critical and participatory education.

A **Summary of Chapter 4** is provided in section 4.5.

4.2 The influence of conferences, initiatives and publications

4.2.1 Understanding the term 'environmental education'

Developments in environmental education over the last century have been systematically detailed in the work of Palmer and Neal (1994) and Palmer (1998a).

From these works, an insight into the roots of the term 'environmental education' may be gained. These authors are able to aid understanding of the theories and approaches to environmental education that originate, at least in part, in a variety of historical environmental symposia.

The term 'environmental education' is said to have originated in 1948, at a Paris conference of the **International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources**. In the UK it is believed that the term environmental education was first mentioned in 1965 at Keele University. There followed a major landmark for education in the publication of the 1967 Plowden Report, (Central Advisory Council for Education 1967) which talked of use of the environment for children's learning. During the 1970s, environmental education in the United States of America and further a field gained wider recognition and definition particularly in the context of formal school education. In 1970 the IUCN published Final Report of the International Working Meeting on Environmental Education in the School Curriculum, following the 1968 **UNESCO Biosphere Conference**, suggesting that:

> Environmental Education is the process of recognising values and clarifying concepts in order to develop skills and attitudes necessary to understand and appreciate the interrelatedness among man, his culture and his biophysical surroundings. Environmental Education entails practice in decision-making and self-formulation of a code of behaviour about issues concerning environmental quality (IUCN 1970 cited in Palmer and Neal 1994:72).

4.2.2 Environmental education initiatives of the 1970s

At the 1972 **Stockholm United Nations Conference on the Human Environment** environmental education was assigned importance for young people and 'the underprivileged' (Palmer and Neal 1994:112). Two years later, 'interrelatedness', or 'interdependence' became important themes arising from the 1975 International Environmental Programme, launched in Belgrade. **The Belgrade Charter – a Global Framework for Environmental Education** (UNESCO 1975) is known for focussing environmental objectives on interdependence between economic, social, political and ecological aspects of human life in urban and rural areas. The Charter advocated the provision of opportunities for people to learn about and exercise skills in environmental protection and the Charter also hoped for behavioural change within individuals and wider communities.

The next major global environmental education initiative to follow Belgrade was the first **Intergovernmental Conference on Environmental Education**, held in Tbilisi, USSR in 1977. The success of this UNESCO conference has been challenged by authors such Hart (1997:20). He rejects elements of the 'thinking globally acting locally' philosophy characterised by Tbilisi and the 1970s movement. Instead, Hart advocates more 'thinking locally'. The environmental education advocated by Tbilisi is also contested by Sterling and Van Matre, who believe that environmental education was defined by Tbilisi '...so broadly that almost anything could fit somewhere within it' (cited in Fien 1993:72). Tbilisi was criticised for encouraging short-term projects whilst '...largely ignoring the long term life style of its learners' (ibid). However the principles of Tbilisi were to have influence upon UK Government approaches to formal education (Palmer 1998a:10); Tbilisi principles were carried into preparation for a document entitled Environmental Education: Inspectors of Schools (Scottish Education Department 1974) and for a schools' **National Curriculum**, in England.

Other organisations started to have some influence upon environmental education in the UK during the 1970s, in addition to the Government's influence upon that being taught in schools. In 1968 the UK's **Council for Environmental Education (CEE)** was established as an umbrella organisation involved in environmental education. The CEE worked with different NGOs' interests and political perspectives, developing their theory and practice (Martin 1996 cited in Huckle and Sterling 1996:42). The CEE's objectives included general promotion of environmental education and monitoring its progress.

In 1976, the first of the **UK National Association for Environmental Education's (NAEE)** statement of aims for UK environmental education was published. This NAEE document, although a non-government publication, acted as one of the few sources of guidance for environmental education in the formal sector for the next ten years spanning primary, middle, secondary, sixth form and tertiary education.

4.2.3 Environmental education within UK formal education

From the late 1970s the context for UK environmental education was clearly one aimed at young people. It was firmly rooted in the formal sector and influenced by Government voice. A key set of publications acted as preparation for establishing a place for environmental education in a school curriculum. They included an HMI working paper entitled Environmental Education in Curriculum 11-16 (HMI 1979) and the DES's consultative document: The National Curriculum 5-16 (DES 1987). These were followed by HMI's Environmental Education from 5-16, for England and Wales (HMI 1989) and the Curriculum Guidance 7: Environmental Education document (NCC 1990), which officially placed environmental education as a 'theme' in the National Curriculum in 1990. These documents were without doubt influenced by Our Common Future or the Brundtland Report, which had called for a major educational campaign and debate as well as public participation (WCED 1987). A year after the Brundtland Report came a May 1988 **European Commission (EC) Declaration** to encourage environmental education. The Council of the EC resolved that:

> The objective of environmental education is to increase the public awareness of the problems in this field, as well as possible solutions, and to lay the foundation for a fully informed and active participation of the individual in the protection of the environment and the prudent and rational use of natural resources (Journal of the European Communities CEC 1988, cited in Palmer 1998a:16).

In order to meet this objective, consideration was given to the importance of the formal education sector and the knowledge and abilities of teachers. The key role of teachers was expressed in the follow up to the 1980 World Conservation Strategy (IUCN/UNEP/WWF 1980), which devoted a chapter advocating 'education'. The 1991 follow up document entitled Caring for the Earth: A Strategy for Sustainable Living (IUCN/UNEP/WWF 1991) suggested that 'Teachers play a very important role in the transition between generations of the knowledge from one generation to the next' (ibid:4-5). Agenda 21 (UNCED 1992) resulting from UNCED in 1992, devoted a more sizeable space to formal environmental education than to informal education. Chapter 4 focussed upon education, public awareness and training; Chapter 25 dealt with aspects of children, youth and Sustainable Development. Chapter 36 considered aspects of promoting education, in particular via governments

placing environmental education in formal education curricula, so that the environment would be addressed as a 'cross-cutting issue' (cited in Palmer and Neal 1994:15).

This 'cross-cutting' nature of environmental education became manifest in the **UK National Curriculum in 1990**, in which it was recommended that knowledge, skills and attitudes associated with the environment were taught throughout the school curriculum. In 1996 the recommendation from the Schools Curriculum and Assessment Authority (SCAA) was for teachers to have freedom to teach environmental education as a cross curricular theme. The SCAA document Teaching Environmental Matters through the National Curriculum proposed that 'It is for schools to decide how to teach environmental matters through the National Curriculum and how far to go beyond statutory obligations' (SCAA 1996:4). Ostensibly, this approach meant that environmental education in schools faced problems. Problems included: lack of timetable space in a busy curriculum; varied levels of motivation and expertise amongst teachers; dependency upon individual schools' and LEAs' abilities to resource effective environmental education.

Palmer (1998a:96) notes additional problems associated with teaching environmental education in the 1990 National Curriculum. Firstly she identifies a dichotomy between environmental education's existence as a theme across the UK curriculum and the curriculum's clear design for teaching via single-subjects, rather than in an interdisciplinary manner. Secondly, Palmer illustrates the contradictory nature of a National Curriculum that advocates both environmental education 'for' the planet, and education 'against' the planet via other subjects. Fien (1993:21) points to a probable reason behind this and identifies an inherent trouble with school-based environmental education. He argues that environmental education in schools is unlikely to achieve great change because schools function to serve social and economic interests of capitalist society.

In the UK, environmental education initiatives have also taken place at the level of higher and further education. In February 1993 the Government published the report titled Environmental Responsibility: an Agenda for Further and Higher Education. This first UK Government initiative to address environmental education in further and higher education became known as The Toyne Report (Toyne 1993). The Toyne Report's recommendations were reviewed in 1996 by the School Curriculum and Assessment Authority (SCAA) within Teaching Environmental Matters through the National Curriculum. SCAA reported that further and higher education institutions showed 'considerable indifferences' to the recommendations of The Toyne Report, in both teaching environmental curricula and in environmental management (DETR 1997).

4.2.4 Education for Sustainable Development within schools

Since the introduction of the UK National Curriculum and the subsequent recommendations from SCAA, a revised National Curriculum for schools (1999) has addressed environmental education in the form of 'Education for Sustainable Development'. After the revisions to the National Curriculum were implemented in September 2000, initial teachers' guidance on Education for Sustainable Development was not made available until Spring 2001. At this time, guidance was published in the form of a website integrated with the National Curriculum online; it defines Education for Sustainable Development as:

> ...an approach to the whole curriculum and management of a school, not a new subject. It has roots in environmental education and development education.
>
> Education for Sustainable Development enables people to develop the knowledge, values and skills to participate in decisions about the way we do things individually and collectively, both locally and globally that will improve the quality of life now without damaging the planet for the future
>
> (QCA 2001 http://www.nc.uk.net/esd/gq2.htm Retrieved from the World Wide Web October 2001)

During 2002, the Government's National Curriculum website was developed to include additional sections on: teaching and school management, on curriculum requirements, opportunities and case studies. Examples were added presenting teachers with means of including Sustainable Development in all subjects and across all key stages. Presently, a well-founded appraisal of the integration of Sustainability or environmental education into current UK formal education is not possible; independent research literature discussing this matter is negligible. It is possible to surmise that the revised curriculum has led to an increased emphasis on environmental education (Summers et al 2000).

The Government's **Sustainable Education Panel** has indicated some of the last four years' accomplishments and disappointments associated with Sustainable Development education in the UK school curriculum. The Panel has produced four reports for the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) since the Government created the Panel in February 1998. The fourth report acknowledges the opportunities for teaching Education for Sustainable Development through the subject of Citizenship, which takes a new place in the National Curriculum for Key Stage 3 and 4 pupils as of August 2002 (DEFRA 2002: paras 10; 48f). The report also acknowledges: the inadequate nature of the QCA's web-based guidance for teachers; the Government's unfinished plans for training teachers, developing their skills in Education for Sustainable Development and the lack of OFSTED's involvement in inspecting the teaching of Education for Sustainability (DEFRA 2002: appendix B, Table 2).

By definition, the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's web-guidelines on Education for Sustainable Development intend it to cut across all curriculum subjects and to be conveyed in aspects of school life beyond taught curriculum subjects. This said, there are particular subjects to which Sustainability education is considered to be more clearly affiliated. Consultation of both the revised National Curriculum document and the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA 2001) website demonstrates that that the chief links between Sustainability education and formal education are through the curriculum subjects: Geography, Science and Citizenship.

Fien's (1993) suspicions that school curricula are intrinsically bound with aims of a capitalist society are substantiated in the developments of Education for Sustainable Development in the revised UK National Curriculum. This is believed to be the case for several reasons. Firstly, since existing guidelines for teachers found on the QCA's 2002 website draw heavily on the Government's Sustainable Development Strategy of July 1999. The Government document associated with this strategy was entitled A Better Quality of Life – A strategy for Sustainable Development in the UK, (DETR 1999) and it defined Sustainable Development in terms of quality of life,

social progress, environmental protection, careful use of natural resources and, notably, in terms of maintaining high levels of economic growth. Secondly, the UK Department for Education and Employment and Qualifications and Curriculum Authority places the importance of a 'productive economy' above Sustainable Development in its stated educational values, which 'underpin the work of schools' (DfEE/QCA 1999:4).

The relationship between the National Curriculum and Governmental aims for economic growth has considerable implications for the environmental education work of NGOs, (the issue of NGOs' separateness from governmental aims has been mentioned previously in Chapter 3). However, NGOs' involvement in environmental education has not only been influenced by the development of school curricula, conferences and publications. The influence of environmental education research is highly relevant for NGOs. The next section of this chapter examines the influence of research, beginning with a background of changes and trends in environmental education research and thinking.

4.3 The influence of environmental education research

4.3.1 Changes and trends in environmental education thinking and research

Environmental education's links with school-based and formal learning have developed from close associations with the quantitative research paradigm (Marcinkowski and Mrazek 1996:10/11). It seems that quantitative research has dominated environmental education research until the mid 1990s. This paradigm has sought the 'identification, prediction and control of variables that are believed to be the critical cognitive and affective elements of responsible behaviour' (Palmer 1998a:103). Such a paradigm has been called into question by Robottom and Hart (1993:36). They criticise the 'behaviourally instrumentalist' aspects of key research in this paradigm, referring to the research of Hungerford and Volk and others working predominantly in North America during the 1970s through to the present day.

The positivist trend of environmental education research, emanating from North American work of the 1970s and 1980s, has been associated with education that has been *about* the environment and has had environmental management and control at its heart (Huckle 1993:61-62). It has been linked, by Sterling (1993:69/70), with notions of technocentrism and western reductionist thought and with anthropocentrism. Huckle suggests that 'philosophy' such as this has permeated UK schooling where:

> The all-pervasive influence of 'education for environmental management' is very obvious in the National Curriculum for England where environmental education is relegated to a cross-curriculum theme and the associated guidance document reveals no real awareness of education for Sustainability (Huckle in Fien 1993:63).

A rejection or at least a re-examination of past thinking and approaches to environmental education has come about, in favour of the newer notion of education for Sustainability. Martin (1996:51) proposes that environmental education has become 'institutionalised'. He suggests that it is now '...a lost cause and should be

phased out as soon as possible'. Instead, education for sustainability would replace separate forms of environmental education and its sub groups of developmental education, conservation education and others. Although education *for* Sustainable Development has been identified as problematically suggestive of training for a limited understanding, new non-positivist paradigms of environmental education are favoured, where perspectives and meanings may be explored (Jickling 1992:8). This more interpretivist paradigm of environmental education may be said to have been influenced by the work of Hungerford and Volk (1990). Although their research can be considered to be behaviourally instrumentalist, it has acted as something of a milestone in environmental education research. It recognises that models of behavioural change are not linear and it challenges the assumption that a simple causal relationship exists between knowledge, attitudes and action.

During the early 1990s, environmental education began to be re-evaluated so that it would involve wider elements of learning, such as Robottom and Harts' (1993) notions of 'propositional', 'practical' and 'experiential' learning. Through these notions of learning it is thought that ideas can be proposed by learners; their skills and abilities might be used and environmental experiences can be encountered. This style of environmental education belongs to a paradigm labelled by Huckle (1993:61-2) as an 'interpretivist' or 'hermeneutic' science of environmental education via education *through* the environment. 'Critical' environmental education is perhaps 'the next step' - a more advanced and progressive element of the interpretivist environmental education paradigm.

A critical education in relation to the environment has a purpose, according to Fay (1987), to 'explain, criticise and empower' (cited in Fien 1993:5/6). Critical education goes beyond presenting mere explanations and aims to provide understanding of causes, consequences and solutions for environmental issues so as to alter society. Critical education for Sustainability associates itself with education *for* the environment yet, as Huckle (1993) states, it is not usually adopted. Education that intends to influence social forces looks at systems of power and control in a critical and challenging manner (Palmer 1998a:114). It is not thought to sit easily within formal education settings. Even though critical education is said to be an imperative for a philosophy of any type of environmental education (Fien 1993:5), educators may fear manipulation or addressing the 'unavoidably political' aspect of understanding humans' relationship with the environment (Orr 1994:145). A critical education that *is* political may be necessary considering that, from the 1970s through to the 1980s, environmental education effected little broad social change (Sterling 1992, cited in Huckle 1993:43). Fien and Trainer (1993:21) explain that environmental education has placed too much emphasis upon personal change, instead of aiming to alter wider systems and structures.

The past thirty years' thinking and research into environmental education has certainly undergone change, yet it remains that the primary focus of such research has been a laudable one. Research has endeavoured to understand the ways in which people develop a relationship with the environment, which may culminate in positive action to care for the environment. Oldenski (1991) uses the words of E.O.Wilson, that suggest why such a rationale is important:

> It is time to invent moral reasoning of a new and more powerful kind, to look at the very roots of motivation and understanding, why, in what circumstances and on which occasions, we cherish and protect life. The elements from which a deep conservation ethic might be constructed include the impulses and biased forms of

> learning loosely classified as biophilia (Wilson 1984:138 cited in Oldenski 1991:72).

It is clear that such thoughts are biased towards both Oldenski's belief in an ethical or moral reason for environmental education and Wilson's emphasis upon close affiliations between human and non-human aspects of the natural world. Even so, research into the roots of people's real or potential care for the environment is surely vital for any person or organisation involved in delivering environmental education. It partly for this reason that the next section of the chapter is devoted to discussion surrounding development of people's relationship with environment. There is another argument for the inclusion of the next section's discussion of pro-environmental disposition or PED development: An appreciation of the influences upon a PED may be understood as a means to predict or manipulate factors that can produce an 'end product' such as a person who is highly committed to action for the environment. Programmes of environmental education are unable to control *all* influences upon a PED, even if they were known. It is therefore more likely that the value of PED research lies more in understanding how influences upon a PED might feed into existing delivery of environmental education programmes. As Arcury and Christianson explain:

> Knowledge of group differences will inform the practitioner about the level of instruction at which to begin when dealing with each group, about which groups are most in need of environmental education and where the greatest amount of resistance to programmes can be expected (Arcury and Christianson 1993:19).

4.3.2 Research into people's relationship with environment: development of a 'pro-environmental disposition' or PED

The term 'people's relationship with environment' is deliberately broad, for research in this field has addressed many aspects of such a relationship. For example, scholars of environmental education have considered *knowledge* of the environment or environmental issues to be a key element of the relationship. Other work has addressed the development of people's *concern* for the environment, their *attitudes* and/or *sensitivity* towards it, or towards particular environmental issues. Actively caring for the environment is considered to be an especially crucial element of people's relationship with the environment. Hungerford and Volk (1990:8) and later Robottom and Hart (1995) and Palmer (1998a) state their assumption that environmental education has had the shaping of human *behaviour* as its ultimate goal.

Throughout this chapter, and later in the thesis, the term pro-environmental disposition (PED) is used. The author's term PED refers to a person's or a group's possession or demonstration of elements of a positive person-environment relationship. These elements are: knowledge, attitudes, concern, sensitivity or pro-environmental behaviour. Further exploration of research into these terms is presented here so as to synthesise some of the most influential elements of environmental education research and the value of such elements for current environmental education programmes.

This section claims that within the body of the last thirty years' environmental education writing 6 major categories of research exist; for this reason the subsections of 4.3.2 are organised under the 6 category headings, firstly: **4.3.2.1 Links between**

attitudes, knowledge and action. This category of research focuses upon the different aspects of the people-environment relationship, in particular assessing the relative importance of the cognitive, affective and conative components. The remaining 5 categories are concerned with research that investigates certain predictors of or influences upon one or more components of the PED. The 5 subsections pertaining to these categories are entitled:

4.3.2.2 The influence of socio-demographic factors upon a PED
4.3.2.3 The influence of knowledge – cognitive variables and their sources
4.3.2.4 The influence of personality
4.3.2.5 Beliefs, values and cultural influences
4.3.2.6 Formative influences and life experiences

4.3.2.1 Links between attitudes, knowledge and action

Research has not considered individual aspects or factors of PED development in isolation. In many cases writers have sought to identify links between the factors, suggesting where one set might predict or influence another. Research into the perceived links between attitudinal, knowledge-based and action-based factors is reviewed here.

An early rationale for such work comes from Ramsey and Rickson (1976) who focus upon links between environmental knowledge and attitudes, stating that current research of the 1990s suffered from insufficient distinction between people who held merely favourable attitudes toward the environment and those who were ardently interested. Arbuthnot (1977:230) also wished to learn '...how individuals who have committed themselves to a pro-environmental behaviour differ from less involved individuals'. In addition to looking at behaviour, Arbuthnot's work is concerned with predictors of environmental knowledge amongst his sample of recyclers and non-recyclers. Arbuthnot's work is limited to the context of recycling but the overall findings and inferences prove interesting. It was found that recyclers, in comparison to the non-recyclers, possessed a number of personality and more particularly education differences. This enabled Arbuthnot to suggest that environmental education should be adapted to meet the differences of people's personality and indeed influence aspects of personality, for example by enabling belief in one's ability to control aspects of life.

Borden and Schettino (1979) consider three elements of PED development: knowledge, attitudes (or emotion or feelings) and action. These three components are referred to as cognitive, affective and conative. Borden and Schettino propose that these components relate to each other in such a way that behaviour constituting positive action in or for the environment is considered to be a product of positive feelings or attitudes. Among a sample of 203 male and 327 female psychology students, Borden and Schettino (1979:38) found that knowledge of the environment is *not* a necessary condition for individual environmental action. Neither does knowledge lead to a significant change in affective reactions, even though a higher affective response from students did lead to them seeking environmental knowledge. The research acknowledges the potential impact of different teaching styles to be a factor in the students' responses, however it is concluded that attitudes and knowledge are not related whilst the conative or action element of students' relations with their environment is influenced by both cognitive and affective elements.

The view that attitudes play some role in developing environmental action is concurred by Weigel's (1983) concept of attitudes:

> Although definitions vary, there is general agreement that attitudes represent relatively enduring sets of beliefs and feelings about an aspect, which predisposes the attitude holder to act in a particular way toward that object (Weigel 1983:342).

The nature of such attitudes might be encompassed in a concept that a number of authors refer to as environmental *sensitivity*. Sia et al (1985), Sivek and Hungerford (1989) and Marcinkowski (1989) believe sensitivity to be an important predictor of environmental behaviour. Sward (1996:310) cites Peterson's (1982) definition of sensitivity from his Masters Thesis: 'a set of affective attributes (i.e. appreciation, caring or valuing) which results in an individual viewing the environment from an empathetic perspective'. At this point it seems worthwhile digressing briefly to consider the concept of empathy with the environment and how it contributes to environmental sensitivity.

Chawla (1998:18) suggests that acceptance of empathy as an aspect of sensitivity implies understanding environmental sensitivity as 'a participation in the environment's own feelings'. This she sees as relative to animism whereby young children in particular, animate inanimate objects in the natural and non-natural environment. Chawla is more comfortable with her own re-definition of environmental sensitivity to mean: 'A predisposition to take an interest in learning about the environment, feeling concern for it, and acting to conserve it, on the basis of formative experiences' (Chawla 1998:18). So, although a person may possess empathy with the environment, sensitivity is a position in a person's thinking which is likely to generate action to care for the environment. In accordance with Chawla's view, an attitude of sensitivity has clear links with behaviour.

The 1990s saw further development of research into sensitivity and its development through key formative experiences (see section 4.3.2.6). Prior to this, there was continued research into the connections between knowledge attitudes and behaviour in development of the people-environment relationship. In a paper entitled Responding to Environmental Concerns: What Factors Guide Individual Actions?, Axelrod and Lehman (1993) conclude that an attitude of concern about the environment is not sufficient to predict action, (consistent with the views of Tracy and Oskamp 1983/4 and Constanzo et al 1986). Action is purported to be dependent upon not just one but on a number of factors such as an individual's feelings towards the environmental issue in question (an 'attitudinal factor'), or individual's knowledge and ability to act in line with his or her attitude (an 'efficacy factor'). Thirdly, action may affected by an individual's desire for outcome from that action (an 'outcome desire'), which might be a tangible reward, social acceptance, or the knowledge that one has acted in accordance with 'one's deeply held principles' (Axelrod and Lehman 1993). Since these researchers found that their student sample acted with differing outcome desires to the community sample, the implication for environmental education is, as Arbuthnot (1977) previously implies, the need for *tailored programmes for different groups.*

Other research, that has considered factors guiding environmental action, includes the work of Scott and Willits (1994). They propose that a weak link exists between attitudes and behaviour that is explainable in part by people being unaware of what environmentally responsible behaviour they could accomplish. On the other hand,

with *awareness of strategies* for environmental action, likelihood of engagement in such action is much greater. This view supports that of Sia et al (1985) who propose that perceived knowledge of strategies for environmental action are, along with perceived skill in such strategies and possession of environmental sensitivity, three of the best predictors of pro-environmental behaviour. Scott and Willits (1994:239) find that among Pennsylvanian residents in the United States, positive environmental attitudes are unlikely to play a direct role in the residents' action for environmental protection. For these authors, a more likely influence comes from social characteristics (gender, age, education, income, political ideology), as 'predictors of environmentally orientated behaviours'.

This positivist paradigm of work, seeking to identify what might predict or change individual learner behaviour, appears to culminate in studies carried out by Sia, et al (1985) and Hines et al (1986/7). Each of these studies in some way seeks to ascertain the most likely predictors of environmental behaviour. Sia et al identify eight key variables in predicting environmentally responsible behaviours, which in addition to the aforementioned three include psychological sex role classification; individual locus of control; group locus of control; attitude toward pollution and belief in technology.

Hines et al (1986/7) carried out an eminent meta-analysis of research into variables thought to have the greatest influence upon individuals taking environmentally responsible action. Hines et al find that, from 1970s and 1980s research, 380 empirical studies investigated perceived influences upon environmentally responsible behaviour. Hines and his colleagues place the collection of influences from these 380 studies into four categories of variables: cognitive, psychosocial, demographic and fourthly, experiments and/or behaviour interventions to encourage behaviour change. Of the cognitive variables it is suggested that *knowledge of environmental issues* and *how to take action* are more likely to result in engagement in pro-environmental behaviour. From the second category, *positive attitudes* towards the environment and *internal locus of control* are factors most likely to result in people reporting their environmental behaviour or action. Hines and his colleagues conclude that, of the demographic variables, there exists a weak relation between *income* and report of environmentally responsible behaviour; *younger* people and those with higher *education* were slightly more likely to report such behaviour. Gender however is not found to be a predictor of action.

Finally, the experiments detailed in the meta-analysis indicate that a variety of *skills* in approaching solutions to environmental problems successfully increase environmentally responsible behaviours. Overall, Hines et al emphasise the importance of knowledge of both environmental problems and knowledge of courses of action to be related to a person's intention to care for the environment. In addition, they endorse the need for *manipulation of situational factors* including economic constraints, social pressure and opportunities to choose courses of action so as to enable people to engage in environmentally responsible behaviours.

It is considered necessary that this chapter looks beyond the discourse that has concentrated upon links between knowledge, attitudes and action. Although Hines et al (1986/7) produce quite an original understanding of influences upon environmental behaviour there appears to be a wider and more complex set of influences upon the whole pro-environmental disposition (PED). The purpose of the next sub-section is to examine in greater detail the extensive range of potential

variables influencing the development of a PED, beginning with the influence of socio-demographic factors.

4.3.2.2 The influence of socio-demographic factors upon a PED

4.3.2.2.1 The influence of age, stage and socio-economic status

Socio-demographic variables that may influence people's relationship with environment refer to the conditions of people and their communities, including specific variables such as age, socio-economic status and income, place of residence, education and gender. Although criteria for judgement and measurement vary, there exist a number of important views regarding the relationship between *age* and the PED. First, it is worth noting findings from report of public attitudes toward nature conservation (Corrado's MORI study of 1989). Although representing only a limited understanding of the environment, this study suggest that public interest in nature conservation varies with age: people between 15 and 34 years of age are thought least likely to be interested. It is possible that people without children or those with children over 15 are more interested in conservation; the child-care years may be a time when other interests take priority.

The work of Arcury and Chistianson (1993) found age to be a factor that accounted for differences in environmental knowledge and actions between urban and rural residents. Arcury (1990) also suggested that younger persons, as well as those who are better educated, urban and liberal in political views, possess greater environmental concern. Hines et al (1986/7) also propose that younger people are slightly more likely to have a strong relationship with environment by engaging in environmentally responsible behaviours. Explanation for the theory of age or stage of life as influential upon the human-environment relationship may be found in Inglehart and Flanagans' work. They propose that the younger generations are most likely to possess a post materialistic outlook, which is:

> ...linked with one's having spent one's formative years in conditions of economic and physical security. Hence it is more prevalent among the post war generation than among older cohorts (Inglehart and Flanagan 1987:1296).

Earlier research from Murch (1974:124) finds that the younger age group is no more 'ecologically conscious' than middle or older age groups. Through questioning what groups of people hold the greatest concern for the environment, Murch suggests that environmental concern is developed not solely during youth, but rather at a series of *stages*.

Taschian, Taschian and Slama's (1983) produced North American study is limited to understanding environmental concern in the context of gasoline consumption. They identify 'stages' of environmental concern, as three stages of the 'Family Life Cycle'. The youngest generation, including young married people, is noted to be more open to conservation measures more than middle-aged persons, whereas the older generation favour the most extreme measures of gasoline conservation.

The stage, perhaps a post-materialist one, whereby a person is able to attain a pro-environmental disposition is associated with a time in life when a person reaches a favourable *socio-economic status*. Murch portrays this stage as offering a person

more resources and more faith in the human potential to tackle environmental problems:

> Generally speaking, concern for environmental problems is greatest among those who are best able to control their own surroundings, who are most involved in the life in their own community and who are in the best position to influence the decisions that shape it (Murch 1974:24).

The argument that a person who is better off economically, therefore more able to take control of their surroundings, has been discussed by a number of writers in connection with the concept of needs and socio-economic security. Thinking in the same vein as Maslow (1970), McInnis and Albrecht (1975:578) propose that '...it may be that only when economic needs are met can one develop a concern of the quality of the environment'. In the public survey work of MORI (1987) social economic class is reported to have an influence upon attitudes toward nature conservation, as an aspect of the environment. 39% of the (now outdated) A or B classes investigated are very or extremely likely to be interested in nature conservation. Only 8% of the Ds or Es express the same interest. It appears that interest in environmental issues may be linked with people's assessment of whether their economic needs are met. Supporting this notion is MORI's (1997) finding that environmental concern rises higher in the public consciousness at times of economic boom. Inglehart and Flanagan (1987:1296) support this notion, suggesting that economic and physical security are more likely to develop what they call a 'post materialistic outlook' and, in conjunction, environmental concern.

Other studies have drawn a link between higher socio-economic variables and pro-environmental attitudes, knowledge or behaviour (Tucker 1978, Hines et al 1986/7, Vining and Ebreo 1990). It is higher income that appears to be the identified influence. In these studies a higher income is slightly more likely to be linked with higher environmentally responsible behaviour that is manifested in recyling behaviour and/or membership of environmental groups. Murch (1974:38) draws attention to the fact that it is those who have the economic capacity to shape the environment in both negative and positive ways. However, Dunlap et al (1983) question whether there are real differences between the life conditions of environmentalists and the general public that support the notion that middle class people are more likely to be environmentalists. Similarly Granzin and Olsen (1991:182) find that, contrary to their own hypothesis for their survey of 348 western Americans, recyclers are often the most economically disadvantaged of the sample. Similarly Buttel and Flinn (1978) challenge the class-PED link. They proposed that where it has been presumed that the middle classes have dominated environmentalism, it is really education and not income or job that have accounted for environmental attitudes and behaviour.

4.3.2.2.2 The influence of education

Research that considers the value of education upon the people-environment relationship has developed in two separate contexts. Firstly, environmental education research throughout the 1970s and 1980s aimed to discern whether more educated or highly qualified persons are more favourable towards the environment – in either attitude or behaviour. Secondly, in more recent studies that have sought to identify life experiences that contribute to environmental concern, the influence of more specifically environmentally-orientated education has been explored. Most

literature concerns this second theory of educational influence and is discussed separately under the subheading of 4.3.2.6 'Formative influences and experiences'.

Formal education is thought to be more influential upon the development of people's commitment to the environment than either personality or attitudinal variables (Arbuthnot 1977:23). Arcury's (1990) work supports the view that greater environmental knowledge may stem from people's exposure to greater levels of formal education. In Arcury's (1990) work with Christianson, differences in people's education are thought to be partly responsible for the differences in both urban and rural residents' environmental knowledge. Granzin and Olsen (1991:178) propose the existence of a positive link between education and engagement in conservation and environmental protection. Such a link is also identified in the findings of Balderjahn (1988), Samdahl and Robertson (1989) and Vanliere and Dunlap (1980). Hines et al (1986/7:5) also confirm the influence of education upon PED development: engagement in environmentally responsible behaviour is thought to be slightly more prevalent amongst those exposed to more formal education.

Palmer (1998b:154) explains how her studies demonstrate that education can be a relevant influence upon environmental concern. Within Palmer's 232 person sample from her (1993) and (1996) studies, 'education' was found to be the second largest major influence on environmental concern after 'outdoor experiences'. 37% of the sample was influenced by higher education or education experienced in adulthood. Only 22% of the 232 persons cited school courses as influential and there were no cases where school courses below A' level were thought to be a single most important influence. Palmer (1998b) cites another of her studies, with a focus upon changing attitudes about the environment. Within her 182-person sample, only 5% found that education greatly influenced a change in their attitudes about animals; 13% specified education as the single most important influence affecting their attitudes towards the environment. In a third study concerning 50 undergraduates' subject and community knowledge, Palmer reports that 38% reported formal education as a most significant influence upon their acquisition of their environmental understandings; Palmer (1998b:155) comments that this figure is low, considering that all in her undergraduate sample were exposed to many years of education.

In the minds of the UK public, it seems that formal education is not always an influential source of interest in the environment. Of those questioned about nature conservation in a MORI (1987) public survey, only a small proportion of people (3%) reported that schools or university had influenced their own interest in nature conservation. However it seems that the same public sample believe that formal education *could* encourage interest in nature conservation. Just over half (51%) of MORI's 1987 sample believed 'too little' time was spent upon nature conservation education within schools; 25% saw there to be the sufficient education and only 2% viewed there to be too much of this education (MORI 1987:17/18).

There is research that finds the role of formal environmental education to be associated with a purpose other than creating an interest in nature conservation. Murch believes that formal education should offer effective and meaningful experiences if it can first overcome what he calls:

> ...all of those deprivations in schooling, employment, housing and other areas of social life which act to limit personal development and to thwart personal initiative Murch (1974:38).

More recently, Arcury and Christianson (1993:24) suggest that a role for environmental education should be in 'promoting equity across the population'. Similarly, Robottom and Hart (1995) call for environmental education research that addresses the different socio-cultural, economic and political circumstances that affect the way schools operate. Socio-cultural contexts, in which schools and societies function, may be fashioned by differences in gender. It is the potential influence of gender upon the PED that is discussed next.

4.3.2.2.3 The influence of gender

The demographic variable of gender has been explored since the mid 1970s in terms of its influence upon support for conservation and environmental protection. As with other demographic variables, findings supporting gender or gender traits as clear predictors of a PED are somewhat erratic. Whereas Van Liere and Dunlap (1980) suggest weak support for the hypothesis that males are more concerned for the environment, McStay and Dunlap (1982) propose moderate support for females as slightly more prone to exhibit 'personal' environmental behaviour. Such behaviour includes recycling, concern for resource use, pollution control and avoiding consumption of environmentally damaging products. Females are described as less competitive than males, less involved in 'market place mentality' and less powerful in scientific/political institutions. Behaviour associated with males is more 'public', involving letter writing and overt political action and males are thought to be more knowledgeable of environmental issues (Arcury 1990:301). These differences are considered as potential explanations for variations amongst females' and males' environmentally responsible behaviour (McStay and Dunlap 1982:297). Wotkyns (1997) proposes that the feminine trait of empathy is more pro-environmental than the masculine trait of anthropocentrism, described as:

> A doctrine or theory which elevates humanity as the centrepiece of the universe and sees the well being of human kind as the ultimate purpose of things (Eysenck, Arnold and Meili1972, cited in Wotkyns 1997:61).

The earlier psychological study of Borden and Francis (1978) points, not to greater involvement of either men or women in environmentally responsible behaviour, but to differences in their reasons for involvement in the environmental movement. Environmentally concerned females are found to be more extrovert than those without such concern. This may, perhaps, be explained by the notion that:

> For women, and especially those with strong motivation, the environmental forum may be viewed as a place to exercise and develop interpersonal and leadership skills...highly environmentally concerned females are, in a word, leaders (Borden and Francis 1978:199/200).

These authors considered the fact that the women's movement of the 1960s and 1970s, which coincided with an environmental movement of the same period presented women with the 'environment' as a forum in which they might achieve recognition. Saleh (1988) also points to cases where eco-feminists' action are linked to the need for social affirmation. Contrary to the beliefs of McStay and Dunlap, (1982) male involvement in environmental movements has been less based upon achievement of recognition and more focussed upon the issues themselves.

More recently, difference between adolescent male and female environmental involvement has been highlighted in Kidd and Kidds' (1997) study of adolescent wildlife education volunteers. Owing to the fact that their research attracted more than twice as many female participants, Kidd and Kidd concluded that more girls than boys become volunteers in the field of wildlife education. Girls' involvement in wildlife education was partly due to their greater enjoyment of working with children (Kidd and Kidd 1997:747). However, differences between the environmental concern of males and females are not clearly discernible. Kidd and Kidd (1997:752) make an unsupported claim that girls are 'trained to be more nurturant to animals as well as children and adults' and such a view fits well with the traditional feminine ideological set proposed by Saleh (1988), who acknowledges an association with women and nurture.

The principal use of Saleh's writing is in highlighting that it may be a case of exposure to life experiences that is most influential upon women's action. In particular, one of Saleh's sample groups identifies personal crises to have influenced environmental action. Palmer and Suggates' (1996) work specifically sets out to investigate the influence of life experiences on environmental educators (see section 4.3.2.6). It inadvertently points out the potential differences between males' and females' life experiences, whilst intending to reveal any differences between cohorts. Palmer and Suggates' work found major influences of involvement in environmental education among their female-biased sample in the cohort of people less than 30 years of age. Females were influenced by secondary education and influential literature. The older, over-50 male cohort was influenced more greatly by experiences of nature, nature organisations and work. As Chawla (1998:14) points out, age and gender in Palmer and Suggates' (1996) study were confounded and a number of studies have indeed rejected the notion that there exists a clear link between gender and a PED (Hines et al 1986/7, Granzin and Olsen 1991).

Explanation for variation between the PED of men and women may lie in differences of personality (see 4.3.2.4) rather than in specific features of gender difference (Borden and Francis 1978). Yet it would seem unwise for environmental educators to ignore the real or potential differences of lifestyle, interest or experience that do exist between males and females, which inevitably vary from setting to setting.

Section 4.3.2.2's discussion of socio-demographic influences upon development of a pro-environmental disposition, has illustrated that variables are numerous and their influence has been greatly disputed. Environmental educationalists are urged to take note of the multifarious ways in which people are different in their socio-demographic characteristics yet, as Van Liere and Dunlap (1980:193) suggest, there is a 'limited utility of demographic variables in explaining variation in environmental concern'. The fact that concern, or any other aspect of a PED, is likely to vary amongst people according to different environmental issues is a point worthy of note. The difficulties in predicting concern for the entire environment are immense. In answer to this, Van Liere and Dunlap (1980:194) suggest the need for further understanding of cognitive variables, i.e. factors surrounding knowledge of environmental issues as well as knowledge of how to respond to them (Hines et al 1986/7).

4.3.2.3 The influence of knowledge – cognitive variables and their sources

Section 4.3.2.1 has explained that knowledge of environmental issues is not sufficient for environmental action. Hungerford and Volk (1990:17) point out that 'Typically, issue awareness does not lead to behaviour in the environmental dimension'. Palmer's (1995), research into young children's understanding of waste management also notes how awareness of solutions to environmental problems is not followed up by practical participation in these solutions. Almost all Palmer's sample of 6 year olds (97%) demonstrated some knowledge and awareness of the concept of waste 'management' yet these children rarely participated in recycling. More recently it has been illustrated that knowledge of environment and environmental issues can exist without attitudes or concern for the environment (Palmer et al 1999:885). Although clear causal relationships between knowledge and action are not always present, a substantial body of research has investigated various aspects of cognitive variables in relation to a PED. Hines et al (1986/7) stress that intention to act relates not only to the knowledge of a problem, but also to knowledge of *course of action.*

Research into cognitive variables has ranged from study of adults' and children's environmental knowledge to study of sources of such knowledge and knowledge of *how* to take action. The work of Palmer and her colleagues considers research into children's knowledge and understanding of environmental issues. As part of a wider international piece of research, entitled 'Emergent Environmentalism', which also considers the development of environmental concern among environmental educators, Palmer's work regards knowledge to be a key element of children's development as environmentalists (Palmer et al 1999:885). In addition to highlighting the importance of knowledge itself, Palmer stresses the necessity for an environmental education research agenda that investigates children's articulation of that knowledge and children's personal experiences of the environment. Clearly, these elements of a child's environmental knowledge go beyond what Bell (1990) would refer to as environmental cognition, that is to say:

> The ability to imagine and think about the spatial world encompassing general ways of thinking about, recognising or organising the physical layout of an environment (cited in Palmer 1993:488).

Children as young as four years are observed to have various conceptions and misconceptions of environmental issues such as global warming, deforestation and waste management. The potential resilience of inaccurate ideas presents environmental educators with the need to recognise and respond to concepts of environment held by children during their first years of schooling (Palmer, Suggate and Matthew 1996; Palmer et al 1999). For young children of four to seven years, Palmer's studies also illustrate the existence of basic environmental knowledge and capacity for 'sophisticated reasoning and thinking' (1996:326). For this reason there is a fundamental need for environmental educators to recognise the *progression* of children's environmental understanding.

Such research, which has commented on the potential for development of environmental knowledge, is supplemented here by review of other work aiming to understand what happens to environmental knowledge later in the life of the learner. Caro et al (1994) suggest that undergraduates' knowledge of conservation biology may have an effect upon altering their environmental attitudes. A 'crystallisation' of

student's attitudes toward the natural world may be achieved through learning undergraduate course material (Caro et al 1994:849). However without a control group, the exact effect of the course is not measurable. Caro et al considers students' 'latency' of environmental attitudes to exist perhaps in the same way that children possess a latency of knowledge to be explored and progressed.

The source of people's environmental knowledge is not limited to formal education settings of school or university. Palmer (1995) and Palmer and Suggate (1996) note that home, parents, television and environmental experiences, as well as school, are influential sources of environmental understanding and misunderstanding. Young children may learn about the environment through important visual sources. The work of Burgess (1990:142) examines adults' sources of environmental understanding. She suggests that, although there is not a recognisable cause-effect relationship between what is understood and the sources of environmental meaning, there is a need for further investigation into both producers and consumers of environmental meaning.

The Media is reported by some (Altwater, Salwen and Anderson 1985; Salwen 1988) to have low impact upon people's environmental knowledge, concern or behaviour. However if UK public surveys are consulted, there would appear to be contradicting evidence in that people acknowledge television as a source of their interest in nature conservation. Almost 75% of those questioned in a 1987 MORI survey viewed television as an important source of their interest in nature conservation, while only 3% viewed school or university as influential upon their interest. Indeed, even if television may act as a source of environmental knowledge or interest in the environment, it is not necessarily a predictor of environmental concern or behaviour. In fact, it may actually discourage it (Ostman and Parker 1987:7/8).

The Media is seen as valuable for presenting information on recycling (Vining and Ebreo 1990, Jacobs, Bailey and Crew 1984), even if it is not effective in encouraging action. Newspapers may be more likely to encourage attention to environmental content of mass media (Ostman and Parker 1987). Granzin and Olsen (1991) propose that those 'marketing' sources of environmental information should respond to the infrastructure of family and friends in developing environmental knowledge (See also Neuman 1986, Vining and Ebreo 1990). Additional comment upon sources of environmental knowledge is presented in the reviewed life experiences studies in section 4.3.2.6.

Cognitive variables may be further considered in terms of knowledge of courses of action or skills for engaging in pro-environmental behaviour. The importance of this kind of knowledge in developing behaviour is recorded by Sia et al (1985), who place much emphasis upon people's perceived knowledge of environmental action strategies. Hines et al (1986/7) support this idea, highlighting that knowledge about how to take action is an important cognitive variable. The work of Milbrath (1981;1989) affirms the potential importance of this kind of environmental knowledge, finding that environmental group members may be different from other individuals because they feel that they can actually influence policy.

The matter of people knowing how to take action has also been revealed in public survey work. In 1997 MORI found that among almost 2000 people questioned aged 15 or over, only 18% are 'environmental activists' (Corrado 1997). MORI's definition for an environmental activist is the somewhat generous description of

'someone who has carried out five or more 'green behaviours' (from a list) in the previous two years' (1997:1). However for most people there seems to be a problem of knowing what to *do* to express concern. Apart from the practice of individual 'green behaviours', people felt increasingly helpless in taking action over the years between 1987 and 1997, agreeing that '...there isn't much that ordinary people can do to help protect the environment' (Corrado 1997:6). Feelings of powerlessness are discussed further in the works of Hungerford and Volk (1990); Uzzell (1994); Hillcoat et al (1995) and Ballantyne (1995). Much discourse on individuals' or groups' abilities to engage in positive environmental action is addressed by research attempting to personality's influence upon the PED.

4.3.2.4 The influence of personality

The idea that environmental education programmes should take into account personality differences has been discussed in several studies, including that of Pettus and Giles (1987), Geller (1995) and Hungerford and Volk (1990). Pettus and Giles found that amongst 74 female college students there were personality variations. For example, there were students whose environmental behaviours were influenced by their desire to please others; another set of students perceived themselves in control of situations. The former students were more likely to accept environmental education that imposes action, while the latter were less able to accept impositions. The authors conclude that environmental education programmes should '...give some consideration to the personal dispositions and perceptions of their clients prior to implementing the programmes' (Pettus and Giles 1987:134).

Geller (1995) offers a psychological model of approach for environmental education, suggesting that incentives for environmental action are firstly a matter of what 'activators' are used to 'persuade people to emit desired behaviours or eliminate undesired behaviours' (1995:187). Such activators are akin to sources of information, such as written or verbal messages, demonstrations, examples and techniques to encourage behavioural commitment to environmental action. Secondly, Geller proposes that desired 'consequences' are sought from action, that is to say incentives and rewards that may encourage feelings or 'person states' that people wish to experience as a result of pre-environmental behaviour. The 5 'person states' to which Geller refers are: self-effectiveness, (i.e. feeling 'I can do it'); personal control ('I am in control'); optimism ('I expect the best'); empowerment ('I can make a difference'); self esteem ('I am valuable') and belongingness ('I belong to a team'). Such a concept of belongingness is interpreted as 'we-ness' by Granzin and Olsen (1991:182), whose research reveals that recyclers feel part of a group. For Geller, it is critical for environmental education to attempt to manipulate both activators and consequences in order to achieve these psychological, caring 'person states' that 'increase readiness to actively care' (Geller 1995:194).

In Hungerford and Volks' earlier (1990:12/13) discussions, the potential for a narrow form of environmental education – at least classroom-based education – to develop personality qualities is questioned. It is more likely that teaching of broader citizenship and actions skills, with opportunity to practise and exercise such skills, will be most effective in encouraging the particular personal quality: 'locus of control'. Locus of control is accepted as a:

> ...general concept which is not restricted to behaviour in an environmental context. Locus of control represents an individual's perception of whether or not he or she

> has the ability to bring about change through his or her behaviour (Hines et al 1986/7:5).

Hungerford and Volk (1990:12) present a slightly different understanding of locus of control, suggesting that a person who possesses this characteristic expects success or reinforcement for doing something. Whether or not the meaning of locus of control is as simple as personal belief in oneself or outside recognition is questionable, yet it remains that this important personality variable has been thought to influence recycling behaviour (Arbuthnot 1977) and general pro-environmental behaviour (Sia et al 1995).

Hines et al consider that another personality characteristic or perception plays a part in their complex model of predictors of environmental behaviour, namely a person's sense of personal responsibility or 'feelings of duty or obligation' (Hines et al 1986/7:5). Granzin and Olsens' (1991) sample who felt part of a group were also those people who accepted responsibility for helping others and enjoyed helping them through pro-environmental action. Satisfaction from helping, altruism and willingness to make personal sacrifice are personality characteristics of people who engage in environmental action, according to the works of Dunlap et al (1983), De Young (1986), Gigliotti and Decker (1992). Similarly the earlier writing of Borden and Francis (1978) argues that:

> The less environmentally concerned persons' indifference may stem from a generally more selfish, competitive orientation towards the world. Or on the other hand, people who are more environmentally concerned have resolved more of their personal concerns and consequently are better able to devote their energies to larger less personal matters (Bordern and Francis 1978:201).

4.3.2.5 Beliefs, values and cultural influences

The matter of devoting one's attention to 'larger matters' has been discussed by Eckberg and Blocker (1989), in their enquiry into religious *belief* as a predictor of environmental concern. Belief, values and culture potentially impinge upon personality but have been separately investigated as predictors of a pro-environmental disposition. Eckberg and Blockers' writing revisits the work of White (1967). White (1967) maintains that a person's acceptance of Biblical authority, in particular Genesis: Chapter 1, leads to greater acceptance of human dominion over nature. White suggests that this belief is detrimental to the formation of environmental concern. Eckberg and Blockers' research suggested that non-Christians – mostly 'secularists' – have greater environmental concern than either Judeo or Non-Judeo Christians as they lack other-worldly beliefs which might 'divert attention from environmental matters' (Eckberg and Blocker 1989:516).

Several other writings propose that religious beliefs or teachings have a negative impact upon the development of environmental concern. Shaiko (1987:250) suggests that environmental activists demonstrate lower church attendance and less religious affiliation than members of the public. Oldenski (1991:75) cites the view that religious schooling is not beneficial to the development of a child's environmental concern because such schooling cannot provide a child with '...a story that will bring personal meaning (of the natural world) together with the grandeur and meaning of the universe' (Berry 1988:131).

Other authors propose that positive links exist between religious values and PED. It is argued that the Bible does in fact point to a positive form of human stewardship over the environment (Ponting 1991:145); that the Judeo-Christian tradition holds up examples of Francis of Assisi's relations with nature and that messages from Pope John Paul II speak of ecological concern (Oldenski 1991:70). However Guth et al (1995:371/2), maintain that there is no correlation between religious perspectives and environmentalism and in response to White's thesis the enormous variation between beliefs of Judeo-Christian traditions cannot allow such generalisation. By the same line of reasoning, the enormous variation between the beliefs and values of other faiths, suggests that an assumption of religiosity's positive or negative associations with environmental concern or behaviour is unsound.

It can be inferred that from the reviewed literature, those involved in environmental education do not have a role to create or undo religious beliefs amongst the public. Instead, it might be accepted that ' Environmentalism is clearly more connected to ideas, identification and beliefs than to demographic traits' (Guth et al 1995:373). The realisation that people hold certain spiritual beliefs may enable environmentalists to propose a more open and more appropriate set of environmental ideas. Such ideas and beliefs may not be connected with religion but, as Karp (1996) suggests, may be related to feelings of self-transcendence, that is to say being open to change. This quality for Karp is a strong predictor of pro-environmental behaviour, whereas its 'opposite' self-enhancement is not.

Evidence that '*values*' or 'emotional principles' are closely tied with people's PED development comes from other sources, for example MORI (1987:27,39). The MORI survey found that those people identified as interested in nature conservation felt that nature contributed to their quality of life, for their own and future generations' enjoyment. Palmer (1998a) supports the concept that people's interest in the environment may have emotional roots. Palmer's autobiographical accounts collected from those more heavily involved in environmental matters and education than the general public are '...rich with references to aspects of spiritual things and experiences, particularly derived from being in the environment' (Palmer 1998a:240/241). Palmer (1998b:150) observes that from her international sample of 232 environmental educators, 6% reported the influence of God or religious faith amongst the most significant experiences affecting their environmental concern. For example, one person mentioned experiencing '...a strong feeling of the Creator's presence in the lane, field or garden...being born of parents who acknowledge God as the creator of the living world'. 10% of Palmer's sample refers to the spiritual influence of remote places, open space and experience of solitude or freedom (ibid:151). Over 90% of this sample is reported to cite the influence of spiritual ideas or experiences upon their environmental concerns.

Palmer's evidence of the influence of spiritual ideas and feelings upon thinking about the environment is supported by another two of her ongoing studies (Palmer 1998b). Firstly, 182 members of a local community were involved in a study about changes in feelings and attitudes of responsibility towards aspects of the environment. Amongst influences upon the sample's feelings of responsibility, spiritual experiences accounted for one category – the third most important category out of 14 – after categories of television documentaries and media images (ibid:152). The second piece of research involved 50 undergraduate students in an ongoing study of community knowledge in environmental education. Amongst their responses Palmer

(ibid:153) reports '...a powerful sense of the influence of such things as insight and intuition' and many responses were classified as affective or spiritual'.

These examples present clear emotional attachments between people and their environment. Perhaps these examples demonstrate a need for environmental education to reject the positivist paradigm. This paradigm has put:

> ...reason before emotion, fact before value, intellect before intuition, analysis before synthesis, matter before spirit and instrumental values before intrinsic values (Fien 1993:75).

Palmer (1998a:99) is of the same mind, viewing that a shift in environmental education philosophy would benefit from a shift from material values to spiritual values.

Emotional ideas and identifications may be considered to be *cultural.* The research of Sward (1996) proposes a potentially cultural peculiarity that may act as explanation for the PED of her sample of El Salvadoran professionals. Being born with an affinity to nature was believed to be important among 18% (3 out of 17) of Sward's small sample. Cultural differences may account for PED variations according to Steger et al (1989) and Laroche et al (1996). They observe how support for postmaterialism (as established by Ingelhart and Flanagan 1987), collectivism and attitude toward particular environmental issues may differ between nations. Such cultural differences have implications for the environmental organisation working across cultural and national boundaries (see further discussion of cultural differences among life experiences in 4.3.2.6). Finally, in discussing the implications of belief systems, values and culture upon the PED, it seems important to note that there may often be a closer relationship between self-reported verbal behaviour and ideals or beliefs, than between practical conservation action and such beliefs (Obregon-Salido and Coral 1997:234).

4.3.2.6 Formative Influences and Life Experiences

The idea that there are particularly pertinent sources of environmental knowledge has already been discussed in 4.3.2.3. During the 1980s and more particularly throughout the 1990s, sources of environmental concern and action were explored more deeply; research looked beyond knowledge into formative *influences* and significant life *experiences* as sources of a pro-environmental disposition. Chawla (1998) has presented a helpful and ample review of this more qualitative and interpretivist body of research into significant life experiences as sources of environmental sensitivity. Whereas it is not the intention of this review to repeat that written by Chawla, this most recent and well-respected area of environmental education research warrants some consideration. The instigator of such a large collection of research is clearly recognised to be Tanner (1980:20), who advocated the 'maintenance of a varied, beautiful and resource rich planet for future generations' and the 'creation of an informed citzenry, which will work actively toward this ultimate goal'.

Tanner's research explored antecedents of both environmental concern and action. His Iowa sample was small and heavily biased towards males involved in hunting/trapping/fishing: 37 male; 8 female members of 3 North American conservation societies. However, Tanner's research prompted further investigation

questioning whether experiences outdoors could be such a strong influence upon a pro-environmental disposition as Tanner suggested. (Outdoor experiences were mentioned by almost 78% of the sample). Tanner's research heralded significant implications for teaching for environmental affect and action, as Tanner advocated local outdoor 'release' of children into the natural world; he proposed the use of field trips and suggested that '...some agency would provide natural history programmes for parents, emphasising the considerable influence of parents as revealed in this study'. Parents accounted for just fewer than 47% of the sample's influences, whilst teachers were mentioned by 31%.

Chawla (1998) reveals that Tanner's work was quickly followed by a number of similar studies during the 1980s: Peterson and Hungerford (1981); Peterson's (1982) unpublished Master's Thesis; a small study undertaken by Votaw (1983) and the unpublished work of Peters-Grant (1986), and Gunderson (1989). Problematically the comparison of each work is difficult, owing to the variation in sample size, sex and occupation and also because of the disparity in categories used to classify findings. Nevertheless, it is clear that a grouping of influences denoting 'outdoors', 'natural outdoor environmental experiences' or 'experience of natural areas' is most prevalent amongst all studies. In addition, interpersonal influences are thought to be a common source of a pro-environmental disposition; often the influences of adults, friends, parents, other relatives and teachers are cited.

During the 1990s, further research was headed by Palmer and her colleagues who engaged in work with samples larger than those of many previous and subsequent studies (Palmer 1993; 1996; 1998). The work of Horwitz (1996), Sward (1996), Kidd and Kidd (1997) and Chawla (1998; 1999) extended this field of study across a number of age groups and cultures. Rather than doggedly review the work of each author so far listed in this section, pertinent influences evident in the findings will be examined in terms of implications for environmental education programmes.

The most prevalent influences revealed in the findings of the life experience research include: *outdoor experiences; the importance of age or phase; the impact of formal and informal education; the influence of interpersonal relationships, cultural influences* and *negative experiences.*

4.3.2.6.1 Outdoor experiences

It is unsurprising that Chawla's (1999) work heavily recommends the use of outdoor experiences, both in and out of school, as a major part of any environmental education programme. Hungerford and Volk (1990) too, state the importance of any environmental programme offering outdoor experiences, whilst inferring that the experiences of educators themselves are significant:

> ...it seems important that learners have environmentally positive experiences in non formal outdoor settings over long periods of time. And in the formal classroom, we must look to teachers who are themselves sensitive and willing to act as the role models for learners (Hungerford and Volk 1990:14).

Tanner (1980) was the first to reveal the importance of time spent outdoors in developing a PED. Outdoor experience was ranked as the first most important influence in the lives of Tanner's sample of 45, with 78% citing outdoor experiences. Peterson and Hungerford (1981:112) found that outdoor experiences accounted for

91% of their samples' major influences (n=22). Votaw's (1983) small survey of Alaskan summer interpreters found outdoor experiences to be a top ranking antecedent of a pro environmental disposition and 88% of Peters-Grant's (1986) 24 person sample mentioned childhood experiences of outdoors. Similar figures are evident in the later work of Gunderson (1989) and Sward (1996). The studies of Palmer and her colleagues reveal a little more of the nature of these outdoor experiences and of those who cited their importance. Palmer and Suggate (1996) found that the older members of their sample - mostly males over 50 years - cite outdoor experiences as most influential. For this group, some outdoor activities appear to be more influential in later life, for example gardening and agriculture. In 1999, Palmer et al substantiated earlier research by revealing outdoor experiences to be one of the four major groups of significant influences for environmental educators.

4.3.2.6.2 Age or phase of life

The significance of *age* or *phase* for developing a PED has been mentioned earlier in this chapter. The body of life-experience research has revealed the impact of outdoor experiences or experiences of nature to be especially relevant during an important age or phase, particularly during childhood. Palmer (1993:30) highlights the significance of specifically childhood-developed love of nature amongst some of her sample. Chawla (1998:14) contests the validity of Palmer's conclusion that the influence of childhood experiences is particularly remarkable, suggesting that although 42% of Palmer's sample cite the influence of childhood outdoor experiences, more than half of the sample do not. Nevertheless, other life experience research clearly points to the importance of childhood experiences and influences at particular stages of life.

Chawla herself acknowledges the importance of the timing of outdoor experiences in her 1999 study in which it seems that the development of a PED is greatly influenced by outdoor experiences during childhood or adolescence. 100% of Sward's (1996) sample engaged in outdoor experiences during youth. Peters-Grant (1986) found that 88% of her sample mentioned the important influence of childhood outdoor experiences. Peterson and Hungerford (1981) found 82% of their sample to have been influenced by time spent outdoors prior to age 18. In Horwitz's (1996) study, an attempt is made to identify experience and influences across generations ranging through 6 stages of: early childhood, middle childhood, adolescence, early, middle and recent or ongoing adulthood. One of Horwitz's environmental activists commented on the influence of her early childhood experiences:

> From the age of 5 to 7, I roamed free through the countryside with my best friend and our dogs. I learned natural causes and effects very early at a child's scale, for example building 'dams' on little creeks, or pulling up rare wild flowers that no longer came up in the same location (Horwitz 1996:33).

From Horwitz's study and from the range of life experience research, it is not entirely discernible which stage of childhood is thought to be most influential. However Kidd and Kidd (1997) found that of the adolescents volunteering as wildlife education volunteers, more felt that their concern for wildlife arose during early rather than late childhood. For this young sample, pet ownership was seen to be a prominent influence, experienced by 95% of the adolescents – a figure well above the United States average of 59% (Kidd and Kidd 1997:747).

Sward (1996:3/4) recommends that environmental education should begin at an early age and include some experience of caring for plants and animals. Other authors also note that the location of experiences is of importance. Hart (1997:21) suggests that local experiences are important for children according to childhood developmental psychology, which demonstrates the need for children (at least those under ten) to have *direct* contact with phenomena. Such contact would therefore require experience of that which could be encountered by children in their local surroundings (Hart 1997:21).

Other researchers have suggested that frequency, rather than location of experiences, is significant. The body of life-experience research reveals that it is rare for one single experience to be a memorable point in a respondent's life. Instead it is more usual for research to reveal the importance of frequent or multiple experiences, 'preparatory' experiences or a progression of experiences through life. Peterson and Hungerford (1980:111) emphasise the importance of frequent visits to natural areas or open spaces. Horwitz (1996) highlights that experiences prepare for later life. Horwitz terms these experiences 'Continuities and Discontinuities'. She uses one illustrative example from a respondent, who explains:

> My experiences were not so outstanding that...they 'enlightened' me...but they...did open a door to nature that I later was to enter more fully (cited in Horwitz 1996:46).

Doors that open more fully later in life have been referred to under the guise of other important influences, such as work. The working phase of life has been cited as especially important for older persons who have spent more of their lives working (Palmer and Suggate 1996; 1998c; Chawla 1999).

4.3.2.6.3 Formal and informal education

The findings that refer to the influence of *formal education* through school, college and university and of *informal education* through clubs and societies are closely tied to discussion concerning the influence of important life phases or stages. The positive effect of formal education is questioned by Sward's (1996) findings that reveal only 12% of respondents cite teachers and peers as important influences. Kidd and Kidd's (1997) figures that reveal that formal education in the form of science classes, account for only 5% of the sample's interest in wildlife. Palmer (1993) points to the potential influence of formal education later in life when coupled with other experiences:

> For some respondents, environmental concern developed from a childhood love of nature and the outdoors, followed by 'latent' teenage years, and then a refuelling of enthusiasm while in higher education or on becoming a parent (Palmer 1993:30).

Sward (1996) proposes that secondary school may allow those, who haven't been previously exposed to experiences of nature or the outdoors, to learn elements of environmental sensitivity. It seems that for some people, secondary school may provide some important influences, more important than primary school experiences but less influential than time spent in university or higher education. (Palmer 1993). Palmer et al (1998c) reveal exceptions; this is not always the case across all cultures. Slovenian environmental educators amongst a nine-country study cited particularly

influential activities during primary education. These data reveal that primary education *may* be important and that educational experiences of other cultures could be further investigated. From most research so far, it can be surmised that the most significant experiences of childhood lie outside the primary-years formal education system.

The overall influence of formal education should not however be discounted. Palmer and Suggate (1996) reveal that 60% of all their responses include reference to the influence of either secondary or tertiary education. Palmer et al (1999) find that education is one of four 'leading groups' of experiences, along with 'experiences of nature', 'people' and 'work'. Sward (1996) ranks formal education third amongst other influences mentioned by her sample of El Salvadoran environmental professionals. As a separate category in Sward's study, teachers and peers were mentioned by 12% of respondents. Chawla (1998) cites Gunderson's (1989) study, which demonstrates 83% of respondents citing the important influence of both time spent outdoors and former teachers. Horwitz (1996) classifies a set of influential experiences, cited by her sample, as 'education' that includes: experiences of learning biology, ecology, natural history, philosophy courses, field trips at high school; the influence of outdoor areas, Youth Conservation Corps, reading and teaching others (Horwitz 1996:39/40).

4.3.2.6.4 Environmental organisations

Few authors address the role of *environmental organisations'* provision of formative influences. Palmer's (1998:121) examination of trends in environmental education research demonstrates that NGOs have not been a priority; the study of NGOs' environmental education provision has not appeared in the themes of research reported by the National Foundation for Environmental Research NFER (Tomlins and Evans 1995). Palmer and Suggate (1996) are among a handful of authors who have highlighted the importance of environmental organisations. They report that different organisations have been influential according to cohort (and perhaps gender). In their study, the older males refer to the importance of environmental groups, such as the established local Naturalist Trusts (now The Wildlife Trusts) and the RSPB. The younger females of the sample make less reference to traditional conservation groups, yet are more affected by newer environmental groups such as Greenpeace and the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND).

Within Horwitz's (1996) Pennsylvania and Delaware sample, the influence of scouting organisations, clubs and societies are important at various stages through late childhood to early adulthood. Chawla (1999:22) suggests that 'At every age, organisations offer opportunities to encounter the environment and to join with others in action'. Additional to the opportunities offered, it is other perhaps cultural matters that affect how influential such organisations become in people's lives. Chawla's (1999:20) sample of 26 Norwegian and 30 Kentucky environmentalists reveal that environmental organisations were influential at all periods of their lives, offering new friendships, skills and concerns. Chawla's findings illustrate something of the potential influence of environmental groups if they become as well known as the Nature and Youth group in Norway[5] (1999:22/23). Norway's liberal political climate, which supports the environmental campaigning and action of groups and

[5] The Nature and Youth Group in Norway eventually integrated with the Norwegian Society for the Protection of Nature and the organisation known as Blekkulf, thereby catering for the interests of 6-25 year olds (Chawla 1999:22-23).

organisations may account for their influence upon Norwegians. Chawla reports that:

> ...many respondents recommend that people join an environmental organisation, where they could learn from others as well as gain greater effect. The importance of friendships among members as an incentive to join, and as a support during periods of stress or frustration, was also noted by many. Membership in an organisation however, was mentioned by 88% of the sample in Norway, but only 33% in Kentucky (Chawla 1999:22).

4.3.2.6.5 Interpersonal relationships

Chawla's research points to another important theme amongst the life experience findings, i.e. the importance of *interpersonal relationships.* It is not only through environmental organisations that people have been found to be influential. Palmer and Suggates' (1996:116) six ranked influences are dominated by 'people' and Palmer et al (1999) cite 'people' as one of the four leading groups of categories among the formative experiences of their cross-cultural sample. At least one group from the list of parents, families and adults is cited as particularly influential in the work of Tanner (1980); Votaw (1983); Palmer (1993) and Horwitz (1996). The importance of role models in providing formative environmental experiences is ranked as the third most important influence by 82% of Peterson and Hungerfords' (1981:112) sample. Kidd and Kidd (1997) find that adults act as role models for young wildlife education volunteers, providing social approval and instruction in wildlife care. The influence of the family, particularly the mother, is purported to be the single most important factor influencing the volunteers' introduction to the wildlife education volunteer programme at a young age (Kidd and Kidd 1997:747).

Interpersonal relationships may also develop through friendships at university (Chawla 1999); family vacations and outings, (Peterson and Hungerford 1981); older friends and having children (Palmer and Suggate 1996). During adulthood, worrying about and wanting to contribute to future generations are sometimes influences upon a pro environmental disposition (Horwitz 1996; Chawla 1999). For this reason, Chawla (1999:25) recommends outreach to parents as an important aspect of environmental education. Hart (1997:23) suggests that even in a school setting there should be opportunities for parents to engage in processes of environmental education. There is potential for children to learn from a group he refers to as 'elders', who include parents and grandparents as a set of 'indigenous' people who may be a source of environmental learning for young people (Kaplan 1990; 1991). However, Hart (1997) suggests that learning should not be restricted to a one-way process from older to younger generations.

Raising environmental awareness among pupils *and* parents is discussed in Rovira's (2000:152) appraisal of Catalonian environmental programmes. Although Rovira concludes that it is doubtful that education of parents through school projects is particularly effective, the work of Ballantyne, Connell and Fien (1998) offers an alternative perspective. Their work investigates what they refer to as 'intergenerational' environmental learning and they conclude that the potential effects of students' engagement in environmental education upon other members of the family cannot be ignored (1998:10). In particular, the impact of environmental education upon young people and adults can be detected within families where there is an existing amount of communication within them (Ballantyne, Connell and Fien 1998:15). However, intergenerational learning is rarely set out as an aim for

environmental education programmes, and there is a need for further research into this area.

4.3.2.6.6 Cultural influences

It is clear that there exist some *cultural influences*, or more specifically cultural differences between life experiences, that assign some experiences more meaningful than others in developing a PED. In section 4.3.2.5 some potential cultural differences of belief have already been mentioned (Steger et al 1989; Laroche et al 1996; Sward 1996). Previously in this section, differences have been noted between the influences of environmental organisations upon Norwegians, as opposed to Americans (Chawla 1999) and the notable influence of primary education upon Slovenians has been compared to its relative lack of import in the other countries in Palmer et al's (1998c) study. Palmer et al (1999) observe that there are cultural differences between their sample's teenage outdoor experiences. Time spent out of doors as a teenager is found to be less significant influence upon UK participants than upon those from Australia or Canada. In the same study, the influence of secondary education is found to be greater in the UK than Australia or Canada. In another cross-cultural study undertaken by Palmer and her colleagues (1998c), there is an apparent cultural difference between the extent to which negative experiences have an important influence in the lives of the respondents. Participants in Greece and Slovenia seem to have been more exposed to or affected by negative factors.

4.3.2.6.7 Negative environmental experiences

Negative environmental experiences are referred to by Palmer in her earlier work with Suggate (1996). Palmer and Suggate draw attention to an apparent (non culture-specific) increase in *negative environmental experiences* over time. Their work reveals that more respondents referred to negative environmental experiences than in the earlier work of Tanner, where less than a quarter of his sample mentioned the influence of habitat alteration or noticed environmental change. In particular, the females in Palmer and Suggate's younger age group have been influenced by negative human activities in the environment, potentially suggesting that environmental degradation is becoming more noticeable to younger generations of women.

Since Tanner's study, others have also revealed that negative experiences are influential. Peterson and Hungerford (1981) state that a quarter of their sample specified loss of natural areas as important. Sward's (1996) study ranks environmental destruction as the second most influential experience. It was reported by 41% of respondents, and accounted for 14% of the total number of experiences reported. As Sward suggests, an impact of environmental degradation or change is potentially an indication that people are influenced greatly by changes in their *local* area. This suggests that from Sward's work and other studies that have highlighted negative experiences, exploration of local issues in any programme of environmental education is important.

From this chapter's review of environmental education literature, it is clear that research into life-experiences or formative-influences has become a crucial means for understanding how to develop a pro-environmental disposition through environmental education programmes.

4.4 Linking environmental education initiatives, research and practice

This next section aims to identify links between the environmental education research and proposed practice or initiatives discussed in preceding sections 4.2 and 4.3. In 4.4.2 there follows review of literature that explicitly discusses implications of environmental education initiatives and research upon The Wildlife Trusts' and other NGOs' delivery of education.

4.4.1 Parallels and anomalies between research and proposed practice

Proposed approaches to environmental education, shaped by major environmental initiatives and publications, have to a certain extent reflected research agenda and findings. This is as might be expected. The trend for environmental education research to be tied to a positivist paradigm during the 1970s and 1980s and in particular the trend for seeking methods of behavioural change were mirrored in some of the chief recommendations of the time (The Belgrade Charter UNESCO 1975). The chief parallel between environmental education research and environmental education initiatives is their intention to target formal education to achieve behavioural change. The use of formal education as an effective environmental education approach received commendation in the UNESCO Tibilisi conference of 1977, and IUCN/UNEP/WWF initiatives of 1980 and 1991. The importance of national government involvement in formal approaches to environmental education was later highlighted in UNCED's (1992) follow-up Agenda 21. The UK Government took on board some of the suggestions from Tibilisi and UNCED ensuring that publications and curriculum guidance advocated environmental education in schools as a cross-curricular theme.

The revised National Curriculum continued to attempt to integrate environmental education (in the form of Education for Sustainable Development or ESD) across the curriculum. It is expected that all subjects can promote Education for Sustainable Development except for maths, English, modern foreign languages and music (CEE 2001). However, the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (2002) maintains that all subjects can contribute to Sustainable Development Education.

There exist both parallels and anomalies between proposed practice and research, in the matter of using a formal approach for environmental education. Environmental education initiatives have focussed on formal education as consequence of a research paradigm of management and control, according to Huckle (1993). Formal and management-based education *about* the environment has received criticism substantiated by the findings of prominent environmental education research (Huckle 1993; Robottom and Hart 1993; Palmer 1998a).

Where programmes of education *about* the environment have been proposed by educational initiatives, such programmes align themselves to belief in the value of knowledge being an effective predictor of a PED. If knowledge is most effectively transmitted through formal education then there is indeed a case for environmental education to be best placed in schools, colleges and universities. However, the literature discussed in 4.3.2.1 and 4.3.2.3 demonstrate that knowledge – of

information rather than of skills and actions – is a poor predictor of pro-environmental behaviour. Findings from empirical life experience research indicate that secondary or tertiary formal education can be influential phases of education. It is the content of these phases of formal education that is of greatest interest to environmental educators. Research findings illustrate that secondary or tertiary phases of formal education are utilised best if they build upon a set of *outdoor experiences* and *interpersonal influences* that have been acquired earlier in life, typically outside a formal education setting.

These assertions do not intend to use research literature either to negate the use of formal environmental education or persuade that NGO involvement in formal education is ineffective. They merely illustrate that the emphasis upon formal approaches, as advocated by distinguished global initiatives and publications, is inconsistent with research findings and might be misguided. Indeed Palmer clearly advocates that for NGOs or any others involved in education, restriction to school based education is not enough. She states that 'The world's *most* successful programmes in the 21st century will surely be those in which the formal or informal elements are supported by each other' (1998a:272).

Where there has been accent upon the importance of teachers in environmental education initiatives (IUCN/UNEP/WWF 1980, 1991), research confirms their value as sources of beneficial interpersonal relationships and as potential role models in the process of developing a PED. These teachers do not need to be located within a school setting; influential role models for potential environmentalists may be 'teachers' from an environmental organisation. Indeed the interpersonal relationships and friendships that can be provided by an environmental NGO may be extremely important in PED development (Chawla 1999).

A final set of parallels and incongruities between proposed practice, research and actual practice are associated with the themes of 'decision-making' and 'inter-relatedness'. As early as 1975, skills of decision-making were propounded as major features of environmental education. Repeatedly, research has highlighted that skills of participation and decision-making are highly influential in effecting pro-environmental behaviour. Notions of people's involvement in decision-making continue to feature in more recent thinking about environmental education and fall within the more recent paradigm of critical education (Fien and Trainer 1993:24-37). The important theme of 'decision-making' appears to have influenced environmental education approaches that are potentially suitable for environmental NGOs. For example Martin (1996:46-47) comments on decision-making in the work of one NGO, the WWF. Although he wishes to replace the notion of environmental education with Education for Sustainability, he indicates that people's understanding of human impact upon the inhabited world, as well as preparation for people to become environmental decision makers, are fundamental elements of NGOs' educational approaches. Decision-making persists as an important theme in proposed practise of 21st century formal education, receiving reference in the web-based guidelines for Education for Sustainability (ESD) within the 1999 revised National Curriculum.

'Interrelatedness' is a theme that received early recognition within the initiatives from IUCN (1970) and UNESCO (1975). Interrelatedness has been further discussed by the research of Palmer (1998a:249-252). She refers to interrelatedness in her assessment of the limitations of the UK National Curriculum introduced in

1990, and she strongly advocates the need for a shift in environmental education. In reality, interrelatedness and consideration of complex relationships between humans and their wider environment received little attention in the 1990 National Curriculum. Palmer also suggests that the Curriculum dealt insufficiently with the human role in environmental change. The shift in focus advocated by Palmer is one from objects and desired outcomes towards inter-relationships amongst people and environment (1998a:235). The revised National Curriculum aims to address interrelatedness with perhaps greater commitment than the previous Curriculum. The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) website guidelines for teachers highlights the analogous 'Interdependence' as the first of the 7 'interrelated concepts' of Education for Sustainable Development proposed by the Government Panel for Sustainable Development Education (QCA 2001). Interdependence is listed along with: citizenship and stewardship; needs and rights of future generations; diversity; quality of life; sustainable change; uncertainty and precaution. QCA presents the concept of Interdependence to teachers so that they may assist pupils in:

> ...understanding the connections and links between all aspects of our lives and those of other people and places at a local and global level, and that decisions taken in one place will affect what happens elsewhere
>
> QCA 2001 http://www.nc.uk.net/esd/gq2.htm Retrieved from the World Wide Web October 2001

4.4.2 Implications of initiatives and research for The Wildlife Trusts and other NGOs

The following section reflects on the reviewed literature of previous sections that examined environmental education initiatives and research and the links between the two. 4.4.2.1, that follows, augments earlier sections of 4.4 presenting documented examples of The Wildlife Trusts' environmental education. 4.4.2.2 then examines challenges for NGOs' provision of environmental education; NGOs' engagement in critical and participatory education is stated as a potential response to these challenges. 4.4.2.2 concludes with examples from the limited literature concerning the Trusts' involvement in critical and participatory education.

4.4.2.1 The Wildlife Trusts' involvement in providing educational experiences

Given the extent to which formal education has been emphasised in both initiatives and literature, the degree to which The Wildlife Trusts should involve themselves in formal education should be considered. Firstly it is apparent that the ability of UK formal education systems to influence PED development has been limited. This may be an intrinsic feature of formal education as a whole or it may be due to UK school and university curricula that are not well designed for addressing matters and experiences of the environment. Additionally, educators in schools, universities and colleges may be ill equipped to allot environmental education the time it deserves. Nonetheless, environmental education literature serves to show that an NGO such as The Wildlife Trusts should not ignore the important phases of life that are spent in the education system. It seems that an NGO should aim to utilise the evidence that a set of educational – particularly outdoor – experiences provided during school, college and university years may be very important.

Three reports of The Wildlife Trusts' provision of educational activities are presented here. The first concerns the Trusts' involvement in fieldwork discussed by Palmer and Neal (1994:89). Their account provides the example of sixth form fieldwork, where students attended an environmentally focussed residential conference for a weekend. Local planners were involved in the conference, as well as RSPB and Wildlife Trust representatives and assistance was sought from the NAEE office. Environmental education initiatives at global (IUCN 1970) and national level (QCA 2001) have published the virtues of public involvement in decision-making, whilst the research of Fien (1993) and Hart (1997) indicate how valuable decision-making and conference attendance can be.

The value of fieldwork in providing meaningful outdoor experiences is mentioned by Tanner (1980) and discussion of schools' use of fieldwork is included in Palmer and Neals' (1994) writing on provision of experiential education. The importance of fieldwork for first hand experience of nature is regarded as vital for children, especially of primary school age. From the work of the National Association of Field Studies Centre Officers (NAFSCO), Palmer and Neal draw upon guidelines for fieldwork. They suggest that fieldwork should: provide students with a desire for action; involve investigation; include balance of study between people and nature and fieldwork should be frequently evaluated in terms of its success (Palmer and Neal 1994:94,97). Other authors who write on the value of fieldwork experience suggest that it may provide:

> ...a valuable point of entry, a rich source of illustration, a stimulus to action and an aspect of the ultimate reason for environmentalism (Dettman-Easler and Pease 1999:34-35).

Although Dettman-Easler and Pease find that residential fieldwork has a limited effect in changing attitudes, the effect is thought to be greater than that accrued through classroom work. It is the direct contact with wildlife that is the important element of experience which should form part of other study rather than exist as a one-off experience (ibid:39).

A second example of The Wildlife Trusts' involvement in formal education involves their participation in teacher education. This chapter has illustrated that teachers may become important role models for PED development amongst the young people with whom they come into contact. The importance of teachers in delivering a formal environmental education curriculum is highlighted in various initiatives and publications (IUCN/UNEP/WWF 1991; UNCED 1992). Teachers' input into formal environmental education is implied in the development of the National Curriculum between 1990 and 2002, particularly with the 2002 advent of Citizenship as part of the National Curriculum. For these reasons, the aid of an NGO may be necessary to help existing teachers as well qualifying teachers who may recognise NGOs as a resource for later use.

Nicholas and Scotts' (1993) study investigates environmental education for trainee science teachers at two universities: Bath in the UK and Canberra in Australia. It is notable that the Australian university's philosophy for environmental education is underpinned by political purpose that intends to prevent teachers and young people emerging from a 'value and action free' education (Nicholas and Scott 1993:568). Hence in focussing upon education *for* the environment, attention is paid to

empowerment, reflection, experience and action within the teacher education programmes. In the Bath programme, there are opportunities for students to participate in the development of environmental education initiatives for schools; students are required to 'environmentalise' areas of their teaching preparation and are encouraged to develop personal strategies of principle and practice in relation to disputed environmental issues. The assistance of outside speakers, including those from The Wildlife Trusts (under the guise of the RSNC), is referred to within the Bath programme (Nicholas and Scott 1993:572). This example highlights that, at the early stages of teachers' careers, support may be gained from NGOs such as The Wildlife Trusts.

Thirdly, The Wildlife Trusts are able to offer support to formal education systems at stages beyond teacher education. Palmer and Neal (1994) write about planning, assessment and evaluation associated with environmental education programmes. Palmer and Neal (1994) believe that outside organisations such as The Wildlife Watch are important additional resources for schools. Schools are encouraged to become members of such organisations and the notion of partnership is advocated. Information regarding the use of outside bodies and other resources can be spread through council-provided 'Green Envelopes' to enable schools to receive regular information and INSET training (Palmer and Neal 1994:146/7).

Such ideas are part of Palmer and Neals' response to practical problems where the National Curriculum under-emphasises learning attitudes and values and where teachers feel bound to focus upon core and foundation subjects rather then environmental education. The challenge associated with environmental education's low status within formal education is also recognised. It is characterised by lack of staff interest in environmental matters when under pressure to deliver other subjects. One response to this issue is the use of environmental auditing, which may act as an '...appropriate management tool to promote policies for environmental education in schools and elsewhere' (Palmer and Neal 1994:131). In light of further and higher education institutions' reported neglect of the 1993 Toyne Report, environmental auditing of these institutions may be especially relevant.

It is in such auditing processes that Palmer and Neal recommend use of assistance from outside bodies, thereby implying the use of environmental organisations such as the Trusts. Outside organisations including BTCV, The Groundwork Trusts and WWF are named on the Government's website concerning Sustainable Development education and school management (QCA 2002).

At either the level of The Wildlife Trusts' work or that of other NGOs, it may be thought that an NGO's involvement in planning and auditing within state-directed educational processes is overly acquiescent with a positivist paradigm of environmental education. Such a paradigm might, like other forms of education, be driven by models, frameworks and achieving 'standards of success' (May 2000). There is clearly a place for future research to investigate how NGOs - including The Wildlife Trusts - can be involved in planning, monitoring and evaluation without merely endorsing a standards-driven environmental education ethos. Additionally, it should be recognised that any involvement in formal education of The Wildlife Trusts or other NGOs does raise the issue of whether a *non-government* organisation's participation in a *government* driven school curriculum is a fitting affiliation. This issue is raised at the start of the next section concerning NGO provision of participatory and critical education. For this next section, the author

points out that a modest quantity of Wildlife Trust specific literature is included at the end of 4.4.2.2.

4.4.2.2 NGO provision of environmental education – challenges and solutions

Matters of NGOs' involvement in formal or state-led education are addressed by Martin (1996) who proposes that NGOs' influence upon existing education structures is limited by the differing perspectives between the two. Structures of education in schools, colleges and universities are not necessarily suitable for NGOs to work as pressure groups, suggests Martin (1996:42/43). Martin (1996:45) explains that teachers may see NGO educational activity as having a certain 'mystique of environmental interpretation', as daunting, alienating and exclusive rather than inclusive. To overcome this, Martin would see NGOs move away from nature-centred environmental education, and instead present a *set of experiences* to enable learners, especially young people, to care and express a care for the environment. He suggests that 'it is far better if ways can be found for young people to explore freely and develop their own relationships with a variety of environments without prejudice' (1996:45). This kind of education can be termed 'critical education'.

NGO's are challenged to provide the sort of critical environmental education Martin (1996) suggests. Firstly, where critical environmental education – as introduced in section 4.3.1 – is intended as a goal for formal education, it may be argued that young children should not be exposed to an environmental education programme that is overly political. However, a counter-argument is presented by Symans (1996), a member of WWF reach out team who writes on participatory education for Sustainability in urban school environments. She explains that:

> Contoversy is part of everyday life; children are faced with issues inside and outside of the classroom. Learning to respond thoughtfully to issues is an important part of growing up and needs to be part of the school curriculum (Symans 1996:55).

Symans believes that, in education for Sustainability, it is possible to include elements of teaching that address critical enquiry, knowledge and the needs of society. In practical terms, this means providing an education that offers solutions and tackles concepts of interdependency and action. For especially young Key Stage 1 children, Symans (1996:63) suggests that the subject of English within the National Curriculum provides starting points for addressing critical education. These include encouraging children to develop co-operation, sharing, communication and altruism. These suggestions echo the research findings of Hungerford and Volk (1990), Geller (1995) and Karp (1996). Hart (1997) also highlights ways for young people to receive a critical and political form of environmental education. Children may be involved in conferences, which should fully represent young people, rather than acting as tokens of child-involvement in the environmental movement. Young people's environmental conferences may be useful if they involve children who are selected *by* children and if the conferences are followed up with further work, education and action (Hart 1997:143). Action research that helps children to evaluate their own environments, address issues of democracy at first hand through experiences with local residents, professional environmentalists, governments and decision makers is also recommended. Hart also advocates using children's own experiences as a starting point.

Hart commends the contribution of Titman's (1994) work on young people's likes and dislikes of school areas. In this work, children were found to view trees, varying landscape levels, wild areas and places to climb and hide, rather than school grounds dominated by tarmac, colour, litter and lack of seating and shelter. In acting upon children's environmental preferences and providing material for children's local learning, Hart (1997:152) suggests that the NGO can offer assistance and encouragement. This type of work is an example whereby an NGO may set about encouraging young people to participate in decision-making for their local environment – an important element of both environmental education research into and initiatives.

A second challenge for NGOs' provision of critical education lies in NGOs internal arrangements. For example many NGOs, including The Wildlife Trusts, are challenged by the low status of education that has developed within them (Sheail 1998:5; Bull 1986:274). This can result in limited resources for NGOs' education work. As Martin points out:

> Individually, NGOs are extremely small in person power, financial capacity and social influence and, in particular, have very little influence on education. Therefore if the NGO is to be effective, these limited resources need to be extremely well targeted to achieve any form of fundamental change within the systems that do have person power, financial capacity and a social mandate to influence society (Martin 1996:41).

NGOs are challenged to engage in careful planning and evaluation of either formal or informal environmental education work without focussing too greatly upon their own internal personnel capabilities and facilities (Jacobson 1997:16).

NGOs' tendencies to be overly introspective have been discussed by Martin (1996) who writes from his standpoint of connection with one NGO, the WWF. He believes that NGOs have concentrated upon their own additions to the education system and developed an NGO education 'subculture'. This has arisen from the very way that NGOs have developed by focussing on particular issues, finding niches for their work in order to gain funds and subsequently develop attitudes of separateness and competition. Fien (1993:20/21) agrees that the tradition for NGOs to focus upon protecting threatened pieces of the environment has not helped the education process. Fien implies that NGOs which concentrate on environmental conservation have failed to take up the task of critical education for the environment. In his comment upon environmental groups, Fien makes the case for a change of approach and practice if they are to contribute successfully to a critical form of environmental education:

> ...working to save bits of the environment from destruction is far from the most important thing to do. It makes little contribution to challenging the processes that eventually devour more and more of the environment...The top priority of environmental groups should be in increasing public understanding of the need for a transition to a social system that does not devour increasing quantities of resources and ecosystems, species and people (Fien 1993:20/21).

Huckle (writing in Fien 1993:64/5) is able to offer a positive notion of how NGOs *can* support critical theories of education, namely through supporting participatory action research as described by Robottom (1987). This sort of work is advocated as generating 'socially useful knowledge' and aiding people to build their own

environments, rather than perhaps learning to see the world as environmentalists or conservationists would have them see it (Martin 1996:44). In this way, perhaps the sort of environmental education criticised by Fien (1993) and later Hart (1997:4) may be avoided; Hart views much education to have been about nature conservation, rarely looking at lived-in environments, and aimed at people of middle and/or upper classes.

Aspects of The Wildlife Trusts' participatory 'action research' environmental education are highly commended by Hart (1997:133). The possibility for children to undergo significantly *local* environmental experience is presented through The Wildlife Trusts' Wildlife Watch programmes. The 1991 Watch 'National Riverwatch' project, sponsored by a national power company and the National Rivers Authority (NRA) is merited for two reasons. Hart (1997:133) praises it, for the good survey pack it provided for young children and adults and the emphasis upon involvement of people, rather than accent upon merely a set of NRA figures. Likewise, the 1994 Enviroscope programme is referred to for its opportunities to enable children to survey small-scale local environments. The Watch Ozone project of 1992 is lauded for its aptness to encourage children to monitor changes in their own local environment. These Wildlife Trusts projects appear to present young people with experiences of their local environment whilst also aiding them to learn how to develop feelings of 'I can do it' or 'I belong to a team' (Geller 1995) when it comes to environmental action.

There is further evidence that The Wildlife Trusts use participatory and critical approaches, distinct from the conservation movement's long standing ties with all that is objective and scientific. Examples are cited by Rotherham (1995) who refers to an urban Trust's use of art as an environmental education tool. Sheffield Wildlife Trust is reported for its involvement in a community art exhibition of fallen trees and woodland sculptures within a woodland nature reserve. This kind of project places emphasis upon community involvement and Rotherham (1995:10) states how such environmental work can communicate more effectively than 'bald ecological facts – or even the economic ones' (Rotherham 1995:10). According to Chudley (1995), art or 'Eco Art', such as that created by Andy Goldsworthy, can be used to take on the role of political messenger for the environmental movement. For Rotherham (1995) art has a dual role. It can be:

> ...about 'the countryside' or 'wildlife' or 'conservation' with subjects presented to the public *via* an artistic medium...Art can provide a route in to environmental awareness *and* the environment can be a catalyst for artistic expression (Rotherham 1995:7-8).

4.5 Summary of Chapter 4

The literature discussed in Chapter 4 augments the two previous literature review chapters' illumination of The Wildlife Trusts' education work, its potentials and limits. At this stage of the thesis, it is possible to make a number of inferences relating to Wildlife Trust education practice and strengths and weaknesses based upon Chapter 4's account of initiatives, publications, organisations and academic environmental education research of the last thirty years, which are summarised as follows:

- Environmental NGOs have been influenced by a number of international environmental education initiatives (UNESCO 1975; IUCN/UNEP/WWF 1980; IUCN/UNEP/WWF 1991) that resulted in formal education being recognised as a key setting for effective environmental education. During the 1970s and 1980s, both environmental education research and environmental education initiatives were strongly focussed upon formal education and behavioural change.

- The 1990, 1996 and 1999 UK Government recommendations for a schools' National Curriculum resulted in difficulties for teachers to decide what and how environmental education, and more recently Sustainability education, should be addressed. Involvement in education for Sustainable Development presents The Wildlife Trusts with challenges outlined in Chapter 3's literature review and summary. Additionally the Trusts may have the dilemma of working with an area of learning where schools may prioritise contribution towards a productive economy over Sustainable Development or respect for the environment (Fien 1993; DfEE/QCA 1999).

- Environmental education research of the last 30 years has been dominated by enquiries into the means of generating pro-environmental behaviour in individuals. One of the most relevant aspects of such research for The Wildlife Trusts is: the evidence that knowledge abut environmental issues is *not necessarily* a predictor of either environmental action or attitude. Nevertheless, misconceptions about environment can be detrimental to learners from a very early age and educating to avoid or overcome such misconceptions can be beneficial as can teaching knowledge of courses of action in responding to environmental issues (such as skills in conservation practice).

- Analysis of socio-demographic variables examined in environmental education research illustrates that they have a limited influence in their ability to predict any aspects of a PED. Instead, an understanding of the socio-demographic *variations among a community* may be helpful for environmental educators including The Wildlife Trusts to see how resources are best placed.

- There is an abundance of research suggesting that *childhood* is an important time when people are influenced by *outdoor* experiences that can positively affect PED development. An organisation such as The Wildlife Trusts that has wildlife sites at the heart of its work is well placed to respond to this research by offering outdoor and wildlife related experiences for young persons. The Trusts, as *local* bodies may be able to highlight local negative environmental issues that can instigate a person's desire to act in a pro-environmental manner.

- A person's feelings associated with 'belongingness', altruism, responsibility and spiritual connection with his or her bio-physical surroundings may provide important environmental educational experiences. Accordingly, environmental educators may need to consider forms and subjects of education that are not confined merely to environmental or conservation issues but include topics associated with personal, social or citizenship education. 'Life experience' research findings demonstrate that the presence

of a variety of *people* providing role models or friendships during various phases of a person's life – including through involvement with NGOs (Chawla 1997) – can be beneficial to PED development.

- Literature detailing The Wildlife Trusts' education practice has been scarce, yet some of the Trusts' work has been documented and lauded: residential fieldwork, conference work, teacher education, environmental auditing, planning, communication and management. In these fields The Wildlife Trusts demonstrate response to environmental education initiatives and research issues. In particular, NGOs' assistance and expertise in these fields might prove beneficial if offered to schools and universities that reportedly experience difficulties in providing environmental education (SCAA 1996; DEFRA 2002). The involvement of non-governmental environmental organisations in Government-led standards monitoring is, however, a contentious matter.

- Environmental NGOs' distinctive political characteristics mean that they can be well placed to provide learners with a critical education (Fay 1987; Fien 1993; Martin 1996 and Hart 1997) that includes elements of: empowerment in decision making and action; encouraging criticism and recognition of controversy; encouraging enquiry into local environments and enabling understanding of causes, consequences and solutions. The Wildlife Trusts is historically a rather conservative organisation, yet has through Watch work and community arts projects, addressed elements of critical and political education. The Wildlife Trusts has the potential to undertake yet more of this kind of work, fulfilling the needs and niches for NGO environmental education work, either within or outside the formal education system.

Chapter 5 now introduces the background to the empirical work of this thesis, by detailing this study's Methodology.

Chapter 5 Methodology

5.1 *Overview of Chapter 5*

This chapter is arranged in seven sections. This first section **5.1** gives an overview of the chapter. The second section is entitled **5.2 Origins and Aims of Research.** It aims to provide the reader with the background to the study, outlining the study's overall purpose.

The third section is entitled **5.3 Selection of Research Focus**. A detailed definition and description of the investigated case is provided within this section. Section 5.3 aims to justify the selection of The Wildlife Trusts as an empirical case study. The selection of the complete research sample is also discussed here in terms of why and how it was chosen and in terms of the persons and individual county Wildlife Trusts that comprise the sample.

Section **5.4 The Data Collection Procedure** presents the reader with details of the initial stages of data collection, including setting up schedules of data collection; access to the sample and piloting. Next, the section gives full description of the sources of data used in the study. Section 5.4 goes on to explain reasons behind selection of particular data sources and individual research questions.

The next section is labelled **5.5 The Data Analysis Process.** This section is concerned with discussing the nature of the data collected and how it was prepared and organised for analysis. The particulars of the coding procedures are discussed and the author's choices surrounding presentation of data are argued. Since the data analysis process has both descriptive and numerical elements, the balance of qualitative and quantitative analysis is considered. Lastly methods of theory building are explained.

Part **5.6**, is devoted to consideration of **Methodological Issues and Limitations**. This section confirms that the author's study has addressed methodological issues that are widely considered to be important in the development of sound and credible research. The first part of 5.6 begins with discussion of the researcher's place within the study in terms of the author's objectivity, subjectivity, reflexivity and ethics. The thesis' methodological limitations and strengths are considered within the second and third subsections of 5.6. It is here that issues of validity and reliability are discussed, along with how methods of triangulation have been included in this study. The section concludes by stating the influence of other research in terms of how it has benefited the design of this thesis' methodology.

A Chapter Summary is presented in part **5.7.**

5.2 Origins and Aims of Research

5.2.1 Origins of Research

The starting point for this thesis began in August 1998 when the UK environmental NGO named The Wildlife Trusts requested a comprehensive review of its education provision. The author of this thesis acted as research assistant and was hence able to

collect data from the review. These data were analysed along with additional information collected to develop a doctoral thesis.

The doctoral thesis has aims that are different from the aims of the education review; nevertheless it is worth noting the terms of reference that formed the aims for the commissioned review. The terms of reference played an important part in guiding the aims and data collection of the doctoral research. The terms of reference were agreed between the two Durham researchers and three Wildlife Trust personnel: the then Director of Education, the Director of Programmes and the Managing Director. The terms of reference were agreed so that the review would aim, between September 1998 and July 1999:

(A) To review all aspects of the current educational activities of The Wildlife Trusts;

(B) To help develop a plan to guide work in this field for the next ten years.

The review was guided by the requirements of The Wildlife Trusts' Conservation Plan (for work between 1995 and 2002) and set out to include:

(i) A definition of educational terms, allowing The Wildlife Trusts to gain a common understanding of what is meant by 'education' within the context of the review;

(ii) A review of current educational activities to show strengths as well as weakness; highlighting gaps and identify duplication of effort;

(iii) An evaluation of the effectiveness of current educational activities – particularly in respect of their ability to allow the acquisition of accurate environmental knowledge and the development of environmental knowledge and concern;

(iv) The identification of educational work where The Wildlife Trusts are providing unique or key functions;

(v) Recommendations on appropriate educational work for The Wildlife Trusts for the next decade. These recommendations are based on empirical evidence derived from the review as well as related research findings in the field of environmental thinking and awareness;

(vi) Suggestions of ways in which Wildlife Trusts may monitor and evaluate their educational activities regularly;

(vii) (a) Illumination of ways in which The Wildlife Trusts may exert influences on key policy makers at national and local levels;
(b) Suggestions as to whether The Wildlife Trusts should be engaged in these practices;
(c) To suggest, if the answer to (b) is yes, ways in which this might be achieved.

5.2.2 Aims of Research

Aims for the doctoral research are based upon the above stated Terms of Reference. The main purpose of this doctoral study is, through empirical research and review of literature, to address the following two questions:

(1) **What does The Wildlife Trusts, as a UK environmental NGO, do in its delivery of education?**
(2) **What *can* The Wildlife Trusts do in its delivery of environmental education, that is to say what is its limits and potentials?**

In order to investigate these core questions, the empirical research aimed to investigate three aspects of the Trusts' work:

(i) The educational activities of The Wildlife Trusts (for the data collection period of September 1998 to July 1999)
(ii) The strengths and weaknesses of The Wildlife Trusts' educational provision
(iii) The educational culture* within The Wildlife Trusts

Aspect number (iii) can be clarified further in that the author wished to determine:

(a) What are the differing understandings of the term 'education' among Wildlife Trust personnel?
(b) What are the hopes or ideals for The Wildlife Trusts' delivery for education?
(c) How is the culture of The Wildlife Trusts' education influenced by Trust educational staff – their experiences of and concerns about wildlife and the environment?

The two core research questions were investigated chiefly through empirical data collection that addressed aspects (i), (ii) and (iii) above. In addition to the empirical findings, three chapters of literature review address the thesis' core questions and provide a context for the empirical research. The literature review is organised into 3 chapters with the intention of answering the two core research questions by discussing the following issues and themes:

- The Wildlife Trusts and the conservation movement: (i) the origins of The Wildlife Trusts as a conservation organisation – its establishment and growth through the Society for Promotion of Nature Reserves. (ii) Conservation and people – the involvement of a wider public in the conservation movement.
- Non-government organisations – NGO characteristics and the place of The Wildlife Trusts as an NGO.
- Environmental Education – development of understanding and approaches.

* The educational culture of The Wildlife Trusts is defined by the author to mean the ethos behind the organisation's conduct of education. This definition fits with that of Frow and Morris (2000:315) who see culture as 'a complex of social customs, values and expectations that affect our way of working'. For this study, the educational culture or ethos is assumed by the author to be connected to Trust personnel's beliefs about education. It is also thought to be connected to the experiences, hopes and concerns of the staff directly involved in the delivery of education.

There are four reasons which explain why the author's choice of research focus and research questions are different from those set out by the commissioned education review. Firstly the author aimed to study aspects of the review that were of most interest to her, rather than those issues of greatest interest to The Wildlife Trust personnel instrumental in setting up the review. This reason is linked with the need for the author to undertake an original piece of empirical research directed by herself, rather than her research manager or Wildlife Trust personnel. Secondly the research process for the review revealed that the overall data generated would be too great for a doctoral study to develop with appropriate clarity and depth. Thirdly, literature that was gathered and reviewed during and since the period of review was powerful in guiding the author's choice of research questions. Such literature, exploring areas of environmental education and NGO work, helped direct the author to establish the most salient aspects of The Wildlife Trusts' educational work to be investigated further in a doctoral study.

Finally, the author is motivated by the methodological principles of Grounded Theory (Glaser and Strauss 1967), whereby a study's conceptual framework emerges from data gathering in the field (in this instance it emerged from the initial education review). The relatively structured and tight research design for the education review enabled the emergence of a more 'inductively "grounded"' approach for the author's own data collection (Miles and Huberman 1994:17); that is to say the author's core research questions were drawn out of and grounded in the process of data and literature collection.

5.3 Selection of Research Focus

5.3.1 The Wildlife Trusts as a Case Study

The origins of this doctoral research study have been explained in so far as the study was generated from a commissioned piece of research. Although data collection for the commissioned review was bound by the composition of the organisation or 'case' known as The Wildlife Trusts, the choice to design the doctoral research as a case study, rather than any other design, requires further explanation.

Before proceeding with a defence of the choice of case study research, firstly it is worth noting that the author has reflected upon Kaplan's (1964:18-23) definitions of methodological terms to aid her own understanding of the nature of the methodology. Secondly, the influence of postmodern thinking upon the design and conduct of this study's methodology has been influenced by Richardson who states:

> The case of postmodernism is the *doubt* that any method or theory, discourse or genre, tradition or novelty, has a universal claim as the 'right' or the privileged form of authoritative knowledge...it does not automatically reject conventional methods of knowing and telling as false or archaic. Rather it opens those standard methods of inquiry and introduces new methods, which are also then subject to critique (Richardson 2000:928).

Clearly, it must be made apparent what the term 'case study' means to the author. Recently, the term 'case study' has been referred to as research design (Burton 2000:214). Other methodological writings have equated the case study with a strategy (Yin 1994:13) or approach (Hamel et al 1993:1) rather than simply a technique or method of research. Further case study definitions can be found in

Burton (2000:216). She presents a précis of case studies as understood by researchers from Becker (1968) of the Chicago School leading in American Sociology, through to Yin (1994). Yin (1994:13) presents a useful understanding of the case study suggesting that it '...is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within real life context'. The contemporary phenomenon at the centre of this doctoral study is that of the education provision of The Wildlife Trusts as one case of a UK environmental NGO.

In defending the use of the case study approach, it can be said that the main research aims for the thesis ask questions about The Wildlife Trusts' education, i.e. *what* do they do in their delivery of education and what might they do? These questions then require detailed investigation regarding *who* is involved in education, *how* and *why*. Both Yin (1996:6) and Burton (2000:218) explain how case studies are useful for going beyond basic description and explanation that may be provided by surveys or archival evidence. These authors suggest that a case study approach is able to address the 'how' and 'why' questions in sufficient depth. This thesis' three aspects of investigation concern: (i) the Trusts' educational activities, (ii) the strengths and weaknesses of the Trusts' educational provision and (iii) the educational culture of the Trusts. The author believes that it is necessary to intensely investigate the 'hows' and 'whys' of these sub-questions and present the reader with considerable description. In this way, study of The Wildlife Trusts' education provision fits what Yin (1994:41) labels a Descriptive case study – it presents description that is revelatory to the reader. A Descriptive case study is thought to be appropriate when little has been written about the subject before (Hakim 1992 cited in Burton 2000:218). This study fits firmly under the label 'Descriptive case study' because prior to this doctoral work The Wildlife Trusts' educational provision had scarcely been studied or written about in depth.

The author's use of a case study for this thesis can be defended given that understanding the multiple factors affecting one *single organisation's* educational provision is the goal of study. The author uses the literature review of this thesis to explore NGO work and environmental education beyond the single organisation. This is for two reasons. Firstly, the thesis demands a context for the empirical case of The Wildlife Trusts and secondly available literature confined to the Trusts' educational provision is too narrow to support a doctoral thesis. However, rather than stretch the researcher's restricted resources to investigate general phenomena of environmental NGOs' contribution to education – that are nevertheless referred to within the literature review and conclusions of this thesis – the author chose to heed Stake's words on case studies:

> Ultimately, we may be interested in a general phenomenon or a population of cases more than an individual case. And we cannot understand this case without knowing other cases. But while we are studying it, our meagre resources are concentrated on trying to understand *its* complexities (Stake2000: 436).

Study of The Wildlife Trusts' complexities may provide insight into other phenomenon, such as the work of other NGOs and their educational roles. In this way this thesis' study of The Wildlife Trusts fits into an 'instrumental' category of case study identified by Stake (2000:435). However, the case study makes no attempt to submit generalisations or closely represent other cases, thereby suggesting that The Wildlife Trusts case study also falls into Stake's classification of 'intrinsic' case study.

Understandings and definitions of case studies are tied up with the units of analysis that makes up the case. A number of authors (Miles and Huberman 1984; Hamel et al 1993; Burton 2000) state that the object and boundaries of a case must be made explicit. Accordingly, a case is also bounded by clear notions of what data should be omitted. Clear boundaries are characteristic of completeness, according to Miles and Huberman (1984:148). However these authors also point out that artificial conditions such as boundaries that are created by the researcher's lack of time or money are not a part of a complete case study. Ignoring the unlikely possibility of limitless time for research, these conditions were not faced by the author of this study (see 5.6.2).

In proceeding to discuss the boundaries of The Wildlife Trusts Case Study, it is worth highlighting Miles and Hubermans' (1984:27) notions of the dimensions of a case study. They suppose a case study to be bound by its: conceptual nature; its temporal context; its social size and physical locale. Although Yin (1994:31) importantly points out that the case study is not simply a sampling unit, he proposes that the boundaries of a case study are inextricably linked with the sampling strategies. In the next sub-section 5.3.2, the sample units used for the case are discussed in conjunction with details of the case boundaries, according to Miles and Hubermans' dimensions.

5.3.2 Selection of the sample

It can be understood that the conceptual nature of this study is bound by the research questions outlined at the start of this chapter and the theoretical framework discussed in 5.6.5. The chief temporal boundary of the case is the data collection period between September 1998 and July 1999. Temporal boundaries were also present in the form of interview time limits; these time limits are further elaborated in Section 5.4 the data collection procedure. A description of boundaries according to social size and locale of the study is threefold because three sample populations were selected: Wildlife Trust personnel, visitors to Trust sites and an independent public sample with some interest in environmental matters.

Firstly the majority of the research questions were directed at personnel within The Wildlife Trusts themselves. The Wildlife Trusts, at the time of the study, comprised 46 individual County Trusts and one central office known as the National Office. For the commissioned education review, it was initially planned to visit a sample of at least half the Trusts and to collect information from those not visited by means of questionnaires and telephone interviews. Partly because of the enthusiasm of a large number of Trusts to be included in the study and partly because of the researcher's desire to produce a truly comprehensive study, all 46 Wildlife Trusts and the National Office were visited and a total of 131 persons were interviewed. The physical and social locales of this sample are best illustrated by Figure 4 on page 111, which maps the Trusts locations and by Figure 5 (page 109), which tabulates the location of all interviews, the people present and their roles within the Trusts. The boundaries of the case were also set by arrangements for the Trust visits and the visits themselves.

Figure 4 Map of Wildlife Trust Locations

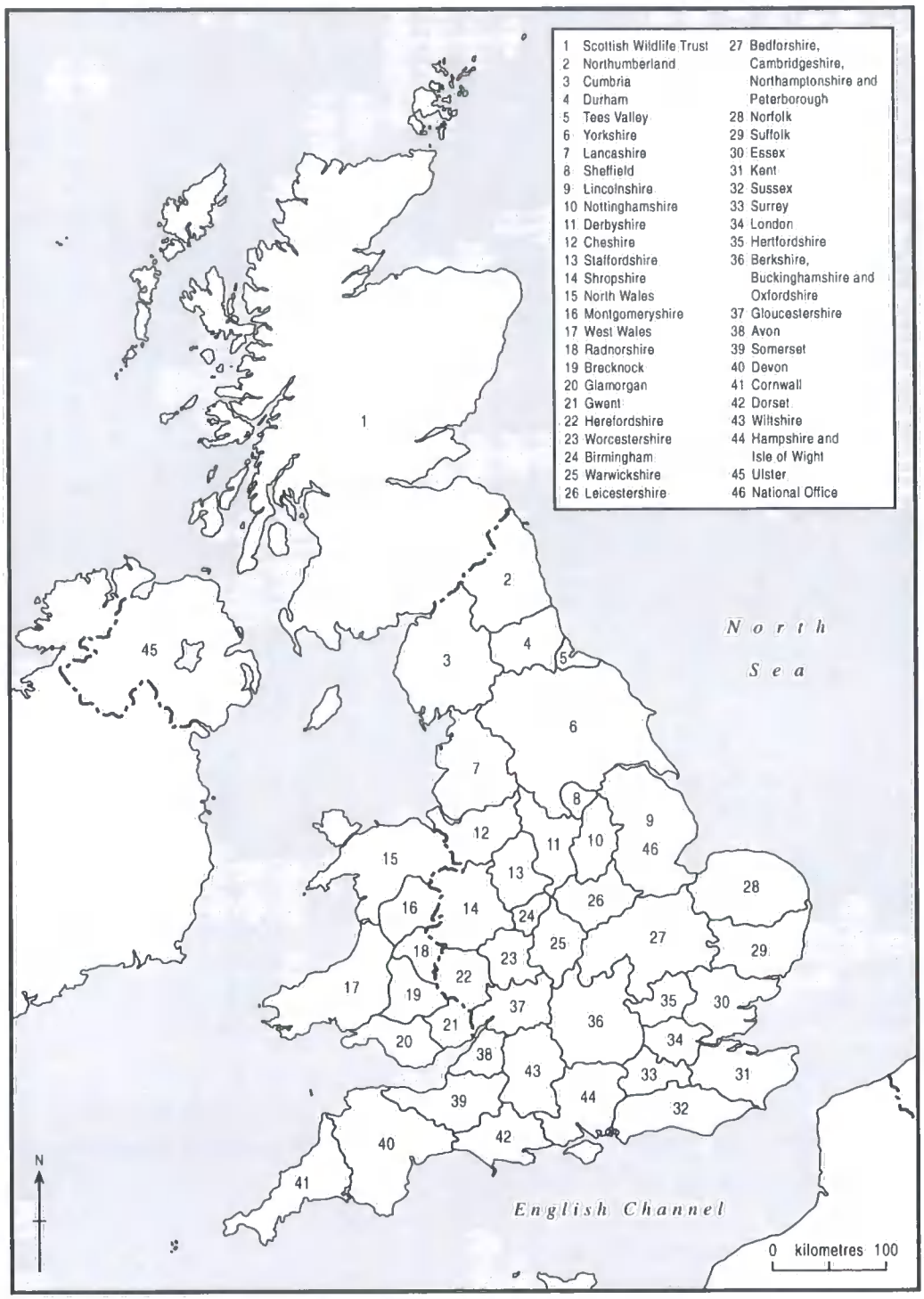

Figure 5 Details of meetings with Trust officers

THE WILDLIFE TRUSTS	INTERVIEW LOCATION	NUMBER AND ROLES OF PEOPLE PRESENT AT INTERVIEWS AND MEETINGS
Avon Wildlife Trust	Willsbridge Mill Environmental Education Centre	3 - Centre Manager/Education Officer, Watch Coordinator, Maternity cover for Education Officer
Avon Wildlife Trust	Trust Offices, outskirts Bristol	2 - Director, School and School Grounds Officer
The Wildlife Trust for Beds, Cambs, Northants and Peterborough	Priory Country Park, Borough Council Visitor Centre and Trust Office	1 - Education Manager
BBONT The Wildlife Trust for Berks, Bucks and Oxon	Trust Offices, outskirts Oxford	1- Director
BBONT The Wildlife Trust for Berks, Bucks and Oxon	Trust Offices, outskirts Oxford	1 - Senior Community and Education Officer
BBONT The Wildlife Trust for Berks, Bucks and Oxon	Trust Offices, outskirts Oxford	1 - Watch Coordinator - p/t
The Wildlife Trust for Birmingham and The Black Country	Centre of the Earth, Urban Wildife Education Centre	3 - Director, Education Officer, Site Manager
The Wildlife Trust for Birmingham and The Black Country	Centre of the Earth, Urban Wildife Education Centre	2 - Education Officer and Site Manager
Brecknock Wildlife Trust	Trust Offices, centre Brecon	1 - Admin. Officer/Trust Manager
Cheshire Wildlife Trust	Grebe House Trust Offices on site of agricultural college	5 - Director, Education Officer -p/t, Assistant Education Officer - p/t, Watch Coordinator - p/t, Member of Council
Cornwall Wildlife Trust	Off-site, Trust Offices on reserve and local school grounds	1 - Education and Publicity Officer
Cumbria Wildlife Trust	Trust Offices, Lake District National Park Visitor Centre	2 - Environmental Awareness Project Officer, Watch Coordinator - p/t
Cumbria Wildlife Trust	Trust Offices, Lake District National Park Visitor Centre	1 - Director
Derbyshire Wildlife Trust	Trust Offices site of Castle	2 - Director, Development Officer
Devon Wildlife Trust	Trust Offices, outskirts Exeter	1 - Environmental Awareness Officer
Devon Wildlife Trust	Trust Offices, outskirts Exeter	1 - Project Officer - Wildnights Out Coordinator
Devon Wildlife Trust	Off-site	3 - Director, Director of Conservation, Director Marketing
Dorset Wildlife Trust	Trust Offices and Farm site for Education Centre	2 - Director, Education Manager
Dorset Wildlife Trust	Trust Offices and Farm site for Education Centre	1 - Education Manager only
Durham Wildlife Trust	Trust Offices on Reserve	2 - Director and Development Officer
Essex Wildlife Trust	Reserve Visitor Centre and Trust Office	9 - Director, Development Officer, Education Centre staff x 3, Schools Liaison Officer, Vol. Coordinator, Ed. Committee Chair, Chairman of Trust
Glamorgan Wildlife Trust	Park Slip Nature Park - Ed centre and Offices on reserve	1- Education Officer
Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust	Robinswood Country Park, Visitor & Education Centre	1 - Head of Education

THE WILDLIFE TRUSTS	INTERVIEW LOCATION	NUMBER AND ROLES OF PEOPLE PRESENT AT INTERVIEWS AND MEETINGS
Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust	Robinswood Country Park, Visitor & Education Centre and Trust Office	1 - Environmental Teacher -p/t
Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust	Robinswood Country Park, Visitor & Education Centre and Trust Office	Meeting for Gloucestershire Biodiversity Partnership
Gwent Wildlife Trust	Trust Office, centre Monmouth	1 - Trust Manager
Hampshire Wildlife Trust	Trust Office, Eastleigh and Study Centre on National Air Traffic Services Reserve	2 - Assistant Director, Education Warden
Herefordshire Nature Trust	Trust Office, Hereford	1- Director
Hertfordshire and Middlesex Wildlife Trust	Trust Office, St. Albans	1 - Director
Kent Wildlife Trust	Visitor Centre	2 - Senior Education Officer, Education Officer
Lancashire Wildlife Trust	Cuerden Park Wildlife Centre, Trust Office in Country Park	2 - Director, Education Manager
Lancashire Wildlife Trust	Cuerden Park Wildlife Centre, Trust Office in Country Park	1 - Education Manager
Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust	Rutland Water Nature Reserve - Visitor/Education Centre and Trust Office	1 - Education Officer
Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust	Off-site	2 - Director, Education Officer
The Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust	Trust Offices, Horncastle	2 - Director, Council Member - Former Chair of Education and Publicity Committee
The Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust	Off-site	3 - Director, Education Officer, Centre Officer
London Wildlife Trust	Trust Offices, SE1 London	1 - Education Manager
London Wildlife Trust	Trust Offices, SE1 London	1 - Director
Manx Nature Conservation Trust	Trust Office, retail village, St Johns and home of Ed Officer	1 - Education Officer - p/t
Manx Nature Conservation Trust	Seasonal Display Centre -Scarlett	Meeting with Volunteer and founder member
Manx Nature Conservation Trust	Seasonal Display Centre - The Ayers Reserve	Meeting with Volunteer Wardens
Montgomeryshire Wildlife Trust	Trust Office, Welshpool town centre	1 - Director
Norfolk Wildlife Trust	Trust Office, Norwich city centre	2 - Marketing Manager and Education Officer
Northumberland Wildlife Trust	The Greenhouse - Activity Centre, outskirts Newcastle	1 - Education Manager
Northumberland Wildlife Trust	The Greenhouse - Activity Centre, outskirts Newcastle	Regional Meeting - Northern Trusts Education Forum
North Wales Wildlife Trust	Trust Offices, Bangor town centre	1 - Director
Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust	Trust Offices, outskirts Nottingham	2 - Education Officer, Rural Conservation Officer
Radnorshire Wildlife Trust	Trust Offices, Llandrindod Wells town centre	1 - Education Officer
Radnorshire Wildlife Trust	Trust Offices, Llandrindod Wells town centre	2 - Education Officer, Conservation Officer
Scottish Wildlife Trust	Trust Offices, outskirts Edinburgh	3 - Director, Education Development Officer, Watch Development Officer

THE WILDLIFE TRUSTS	INTERVIEW LOCATION	NUMBER AND ROLES OF PEOPLE PRESENT AT INTERVIEWS AND MEETINGS
Scottish Wildlife Trust	Trust Offices, outskirts Edinburgh	2 - Education Development Officer, Watch Development Officer
Sheffield Wildlife Trust	Trust Offices and wildlife garden, Sheffield	2 - Director, Education Officer
Shropshire Wildlife Trust	Trust Offices, Shrewsbury town centre	2 - Director, Education and Development Manager
Somerset Wildlife Trust	Trust Offices on reserve	1 - Director
Somerset Wildlife Trust	Trust Offices on reserve	1 - Education Officer
Staffordshire Wildlife Trust	Trust Offices, Sandon	1 - Education Manager
Suffolk Wildlife Trust	Trust Offices on reserve	6 - Education Manager, Community Project Worker, Education Officers x 2 , Assistant Education Officer, Operations Director
Surrey Wildlife Trust	Nower Wood Educational Nature Reserve	2 - Education Manager, Reserves and Education Officer
Surrey Wildlife Trust	Nower Wood Educational Nature Reserve	4 - Education Manager, Reserves and Education Officer, Director, Chair of Education Committee
Sussex Wildlife Trust	Woods Mill Countryside Centre and Nature Reserve	4 - Director, Head of Public Awareness, Schools Officer, Assistant Schools Officer and volunteer Watch Coordinator
Tees Valley Wildlife Trust	Kirkleatham Hall - Trust Offices, Visitor Centre and Wildlife Garden	2 - Education Officer, Community and Education Manager
Ulster Wildlife Trust	Ulster Wildlife Centre	3 - Director, Education Manager, Programmes Manager
Ulster Wildlife Trust	Off-site	1 - Education Manager
Ulster Wildlife Trust	Director's home	1 - Director
Warwickshire Wildlife Trust	Brandon Marsh Nature Centre	1 - Director
Warwickshire Wildlife Trust	Brandon Marsh Nature Centre	2 - Education Officers x 2
Warwickshire Wildlife Trust	Brandon Marsh Nature Centre	1 - Community and Education Manager
The Wildlife Trust, West Wales	West Wales Wildlife Centre, Glamorgan	2 - Education Officer p/t and Head of Conservation
Wiltshire Wildlife Trust	Trust Offices, Devizes town centre	1 - Director
Wiltshire Wildlife Trust	Trust Offices, Devizes town centre	2 - Director, Head of Education
Wiltshire Wildlife Trust	Trust Offices, Devizes town centre	1 - Head of Education
Worcestershire Wildlife Trust	Trust Offices on reserve	1 - Director
Worcestershire Wildlife Trust	Trust Offices on reserve and Vol Ed Officer's home	1 - Volunteer Education Officer
Yorkshire Wildlife Trust	Trust Offices, York city centre	2 - Chief Executive, Education Manager
National Office	Lincoln Office	3 - Head of Education, 2 x Meetings coordinators / welfare & safety / Watch / membership / youth / PR

Visits to each of the Trusts were arranged by telephone call, usually to the Director, though in some instances to a member of personnel with an educational role. On the whole, Trusts were enthusiastic and prepared for arrangements for visits to be made, though in some instances it was difficult to make contact with an appropriate member of staff. It was aimed for the researcher to talk with a Trust Director at each Trust and at least one member of each Trust's educational team. The selection of educational personnel for interview is self-explanatory in that educators would be expected to be experts or key informants in their own field of educational work. In this way the sampling method uses 'reputational case selection' (Miles and Huberman 1994:28).

It could be argued that a case study of The Wildlife Trusts' educational provision might require a focussed examination of the work of only those directly involved in education, negating the benefit from interviewing Directors. However, the author deliberately chose to include Directors' responses in the case for a number of reasons. Firstly it was supposed that Directors of Trusts have roles to plan or oversee all activities carried out, therefore have impact upon any educational activities undertaken, their limits and their potentials. Secondly Directors of Trusts were assumed to be aware of the wider roles of Trusts and so have a valuable view of the activities and status of education in the context of other Trust activities. This might be what Miles and Huberman (1994:28) consider to be a 'politically important' sampling technique. Finally as the commissioned education review began, the author acknowledged that interesting differences became apparent between the responses of Directors and educational staff. These differences were thought to be worth pursuing and helpful to address the thesis' sub-question (iii) concerning the culture of The Wildlife Trusts' education. This sampling technique is an instance of 'theoretical sampling' (Glazer and Strauss, cited in Miles and Huberman 1994:42). Its benefit is in driving the sample by theory rather than simply the need for representation.

In reality, the sample of Wildlife Trust personnel and therefore the case study was to a large extent defined by the communication and relationships between Directors, personnel with an educational role and other Trust personnel. This communication meant that sometimes there were no Directors present at the interview, or no educators. In some Trusts there were additional persons present during interview, such as conservation staff, development, marketing staff or volunteers (for discussion around the case study's unintentional inclusion of additional Trust personnel responses see part 5.6.2 Methodological Issues and Limitations).

Further details of the Wildlife Trust personnel interviewed during visits have been clearly illustrated in Figure 5 (page 109). The figure presented information about the 131-person interview sample comprising 85 'educational staff' including those with titles of education manager, education officer, awareness officer, community staff, centre and site officers who represented Trusts' educational work in the interview sessions. There were also 32 'directors' interviewed including those named directors, assistant directors, chief executives, Trust managers and directors of operations. 14 'others' make up the remaining sample and include conservation staff, marketing staff, programme managers, volunteers and trustees who did not have 'education' specified in their role. The core interview questions asked of the 131-person sample may be found in Appendix A on page 303.

In addition to the 131-person sample, 14 educational staff were chosen as a sub-sample for further in-depth interview. Of these 14 staff, 12 provided useable

interviews. One unused interview was used as a pilot and another was discarded due to poor tape-recording. The in-depth interview questions (detailed in section 5.4) were designed to reveal more about the culture of The Wildlife Trusts' educational practice as influenced by the education staff's own experiences of and concern about wildlife and the environment. The 12 staff were selected through 'multi-stage' and 'purposive sampling' techniques (Denscombe 1998:14-15). The term multi-stage sampling correctly describes the procedure used since the 12 education staff formed part of the previous Wildlife Trust sample taking part in the initial interviews or 'first stage'. These members of staff were sampled via a purposive sampling technique for a number of reasons. Firstly, the author purposely wished to talk to paid education staff who potentially have greater involvement the Trusts' education work than education volunteers. Secondly, staff were chosen for in-depth interview if they demonstrated an interest or involvement in the first stage of questions, that is to say they were willing to talk further about their work and interests. Baxter and Eyles (1997) strengthen the author's argument for this technique of purposeful sampling. They suggest that, through purposeful sampling, a researcher is placing emphasis on using 'information-rich cases', where respondents are chosen because they are at ease to talk with the interviewer (Baxter and Eyles 1997:513). The 11 Trusts whose educational staff formed part of this 12-person sample included: Avon; Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire; Birmingham; Cornwall; Cumbria; Devon (2 persons interviewed); Gloucestershire; Lancashire; Sheffield; Suffolk and Tees.

The Wildlife Trusts case study was also bounded by the social sizes and nature of the two other sample populations providing additional information on the educational work of the Trusts. An additional sample population was reached through **Questionnaires for visitors to Trust sites**. The purpose of these questionnaires was to gain impressions of the operation and effectiveness of educational activities from people in contact with Trusts other than Trust staff i.e. from the 'users and beneficiaries'. In some instances the questionnaire was refused by Wildlife Trust staff as inappropriate for Trust personnel to disseminate. This refusal was due either to perceived difficulties of administering the questionnaire on un-staffed sites or to the belief that the potential sample of visitors would be unrepresentative; or to a combination of these reasons. A sample questionnaire is included in Appendix B on page 306. The number and social characteristics of the visitors who completed the questionnaire were bounded only by the manner in which the Trusts themselves distributed and collected questionnaires. The visitors were not required to provide biographical data about themselves for several reasons: Firstly it was aimed to gain greater trust from visitors through anonymity and confidentiality. Secondly, the visitors' impressions and opinions of the Trusts' work were viewed to be more important than a survey of visitor 'type', which might provide information for a different study. In total, 40 returned questionnaires were received from only 6 Trusts, limiting the physical locale of this sample to visitors at the Trusts in: Hampshire, Nottingham, Scotland, Shropshire, Suffolk and Ulster.

The third sample of people providing information for the case study was generated from **Questionnaires for an independent sample**, the purpose of which was to gain views from members of the public. This sample of 64 comprised responses from 43 Year 1 University of Durham undergraduate students, either studying for a BSc Education degree or studying for BA degrees in Education, Geography or Sport in the Community. The public sample also included 21 individuals who were reached through a Durham County Council environment unit mailing list. This latter group was a Local Agenda 21 Community Action Forum for County Durham. It included

individuals and representatives of companies, schools, environmental groups and agencies all with some interest in environmental matters.

It is acknowledged that questionnaires were distributed to biased rather than random national samples and deliberately so. The questionnaires were designed to reveal awareness or otherwise of the existence, work and educational activities of The Wildlife Trusts within groups of the population with real or potential concern or interest in the environment and environmental education. A sample questionnaire is appended in Appendix C, page 309. As with the questionnaires to Trust visitors, biographical information was not required.

This section has explained the theory and process associated with selection of the thesis' research focus. The case study approach has been described and defended in its appropriateness for an investigation of The Wildlife Trusts' educational provision. The boundaries of The Wildlife Trusts case study have been outlined in terms of how the three main sample units were selected. The sample units (comprising the two stages of interviews during Trust visits; the questionnaires for visitors to Trust sites and the questionnaires for an independent sample), have been described and justified. Now it is necessary to present further details of the samples and the process of data collection.

5.4 The Data Collection Procedure

5.4.1 Initial stages of data collection

5.4.1.1 Access to The Wildlife Trust sample

Section 5.3 has illustrated that research samples were taken from three sources: visits to Trusts, questionnaires from Trust visitors and questionnaires from an independent public sample. The Trust visits provided the author with access to a sample of Trust personnel to interview. The interviews formed the chief source of data for the study. Meetings at the 47 sites (including National Office) lasted between two hours and two days. This time depended upon the number of people involved in the interviews, the extent to which educational facilities were available and demonstrated at the place of interview, and opportunities for further discussion with staff after the formal interviews. The time schedule for the visits to the Trusts is shown next in Figure 6 on page 115.

Figure 6 Time schedule for Trust visits

Trust visited	Date of visit
Warwickshire	11/09/98
Cornwall	12/09/98
Somerset	14/09/98
Devon	15/09/98
Berkshire, Buckinghamshire& Oxfordshire	16/09/98
Wiltshire	17/09/98
Gloucestershire	18/09/98
Radnorshire	22/09/98
Worcestershire	23/09/98
Bristol, Bath & Avon (Avon)	24/09/98
Birmingham and Black Country	25/09/98
Sheffield	15/10/98
Tees Valley	22/10/98
Lincolnshire	23/10/98
North Wales	29/10/98
Shropshire	30/10/98
Cheshire	30/10/98
Durham	04/11/98
York	06/11/98
Northumberland	09/11/98
Cumbria	12/11/98
Lancashire (Lancashire, Manchester and North Merseyside)	13/11/98
Ulster	19/11/98
Manx	25/11/98
Hertfordshire	03/12/98
Scotland	10/12/98
Kent	11/12/98
London	14/12/98
Sussex	16/12/98
Surrey	18/12/98
Norfolk	05/01/99
Suffolk	06/01/99
Essex	07/01/99
Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Northamptonshire and Peterborough	12/01/99
Leicestershire and Rutland	28/01/99
Nottinghamshire	10/02/99
Derbyshire	11/02/99
Dorset	25/02/99
Hampshire & Isle of Wight	26/02/99
Staffordshire	10/03/99
Montgomeryshire	11/03/99
Herefordshire	22/03/99
Gwent	23/03/99
Glamorgan	24/03/99
Brecknock	25/03/99
West Wales	26/03/99
National Office	21/03/99

The process of telephone calls to organise each Trust visit was time consuming but valuable in that it ensured that the researcher gained permission for access to the sample. The author was guaranteed access to personnel for interview because of the Trusts' interest in the education review, though in some cases it was clear that Trusts felt pressured to be part of the review. This mode of access has limitations, which are discussed in section 5.6. Access is highlighted as a significant issue by a number

of authors writing about methodology. Burton (2000:219) notes the importance of the researcher's independent status in order to gain an amount of trust from participants. Favourably, Wildlife Trust personnel accepted the author as an independent academic researcher.

One matter linked with gaining access for academic research in non-academic organisations is the need to assume a non-threatening manner, avoiding a condescending or 'ivory tower' approach (McNeill 1990:75; Rothman 1980:104). The research design for the education review prepared the author with access for the doctoral research in that it sought to involve both directors and educational staff in interview. This meant that the researcher was able to gain acceptance from participants by seeking to 'express interest in and appreciation of the responsibilities of both managers and practitioners' (Rothman 1980:109). For this thesis, the researcher was also able to develop empathy with education personnel, where necessary by referring to her past teaching experience prior to work in academia. This assisted in the author's aim to portray herself as a 'sympathetic outsider' (McNeill 1990:75) and avoid 'super-imposing the world of academia' upon the participants (Fontana and Frey 2000:645).

5.4.1.2 Pilot study

The research for the education review afforded opportunity to conduct piloting for the doctoral study. This meant that the education review allowed the author to refine questions and continually re-evaluate the focus of the study. Kezar (2000:385) highlights the importance of pilot studies as vital stages in grounding the researcher's theoretical understanding in experience and practical activity. It is acknowledged that the practice of piloting is helpful for identifying methodological changes in areas of research design including in data collection, observation, interviewing and in analysis (ibid:393).

This thesis benefited particularly from data analysis techniques used for the review, which acted as a pilot for doctoral work; data analysis is discussed further in section 5.5. Pilot interviews for The Wildlife Trusts education review gave the author opportunity to re-order questions where necessary and identify the questions best suited to both generate and address the foci for the doctoral study. The research questions associated with the culture of The Wildlife Trusts education were also generated during the piloting phase.

5.4.2 Description of data sources

5.4.2.1 Core interview questions

Throughout the commissioned education review, a series of twenty-five questions formed the basis of semi-structured interview discussions; the same questions were used in each location and with each interviewee. Attendance at a Wildlife Trust conference in August 1998 afforded opportunities for observational work and informal conversations with Wildlife Trust personnel; this period was useful in demonstrating issues to investigate via core interviews.

The twenty-five core interview questions are detailed in Appendix A (page 303). Figure 5 (page 109) illustrates instances where interviews were one-to-one and where

group interviews took place with more than one member of Wildlife Trust personnel present.

Responses to the core questions and resulting sub-questions for the review were recorded in writing by the author during the course of discussion and further notes were made at the end of each visit. Nine questions were selected, from the twenty-five core review questions, to address the doctoral study's overall research aims. The thesis' core interview questions were selected bearing in mind the words of Becker (1970):

> To understand an individual's behaviour we must know how be perceives the situation, the obstacles he believes he had to face, the alternatives he saw opening up to him (Becker 1970:64).

The nine questions that were chosen from the review and used to collect the findings for the doctoral study are listed below. The question numbers correspond to their places within the education review interview schedule.

Question 4.	What does education mean in the context of The Wildlife Trusts? Who is it aimed at? How would you wish to see it defined?
Question 5.	What do you think is the best practice of The Wildlife Trusts in general?
Question 6.	What do you do best here, in this Trust?
Question 7.	How could you do it, (i.e. what you do best), better?
Question 10	How do you run and manage this thing called education, including the quality of it? What do you do that has real or significant impact?
Question 13.	Can you tell me about any other experiences provided by this Trust, that you haven't already mentioned, for example: visitor centres, information services including web pages, themed events or educational projects, Watch projects, adult training programmes, campaigns, others?
Question 20.	What or who are the main obstacles to progress for you? (progress in the delivery of education)
Question 22.	What do you think should be the future for Wildlife Watch? Why? Should it continue? Who should run it?
Question 24.	What would you do if you had a 'blank slate' for education (for The Wildlife Trusts)? Would there be stronger national coordination or none at all?

5.4.2.2 Additional in-depth interview questions

During visits to Trusts sites, 10 additional interview questions concerning culture were asked. These questions (see Appendix D on page 312) were addressed with a sub-sample of 12 education staff, via in-depth semi-structured interviews. The interviews asked questions from a schedule of issues which, after pilot, was implemented in the order below.

How staff came to their positions within The Wildlife Trusts

(a) Reasons for work with The Wildlife Trusts

The nature of the sample's concern about wildlife:
(a) What it means to be concerned about wildlife
(b) Issues which are thought to affect the UK's wildlife

Influences upon staff's concern:
(a) Memorable life experiences; age/stage of experience.
(b) The role of The Wildlife Trusts
(c) The role of other NGOs
(d) The role of formal education.

Biographical details:
(a) Staff ages
(b) Job description
(c) Previous occupations
(d) Personal educational background
(e) Rural/urban place of residency
(f) Current engagement in 'environmental activities'

Responses during these in-depth interviews were both hand-written and tape-recorded by the author. Responses for the final 8 questions about biographical details were recorded by an additional means of short self-administered questionnaire. The questionnaire may be found in Appendix D on page 312.

5.4.2.3 Questionnaires to visitors

In addition to data collection from two stages of interviews with Trust personnel, the procedure involved collection of information from Questionnaires to visitors (see Appendix B, page 306). As stated in subsection 5.3 the questionnaires were distributed by the Trusts themselves, with 6 Trusts gaining a total of 40 questionnaires to use. Specific questions were selected from the education review questionnaire that were thought most appropriate to collect data for the doctoral study. The questions used included:

Question 5.	What do you consider to be the best aspects of your present visit here?
Question 7.	Can you think of any ways in which your present visit could have been made more interesting and rewarding?
Question 8.	If you have visited other Wildlife Trust sites, please tell us which place you have enjoyed visiting the most and why?
Question 13.	In the space below, please feel free to make any further comments on your views of the educational work of The Wildlife Trusts, either at this site or in general, e.g. What should they be engaged in, what do you think they are engaged in, and how successful they are at helping to make biodiversity relevant to people.

5.4.2.4 Questionnaires for an independent sample

Two County Durham Local Agenda 21 Officers assisted data collection with the Questionnaires for an independent sample. 50 questionnaires were distributed via Local Agenda 21 Forum mailing lists and meetings. 21 mailed responses were returned to the Local Authority Officers and passed to the author, representing a response rate of 42%.

The author gathered further responses from the student sub-sample by hand-collecting responses from students attending the aforementioned degree courses at the University of Durham. 43 usable questionnaires were returned from questionnaires handed out to 52 students, representing a response rate of 83%. This data collection process, for both the Local Agenda 21 Forum and the student sample, used questionnaires designed for the commissioned review that can be found in Appendix C on page 309. Questionnaire questions used in the doctoral study included the following:

Question 1.	Have you heard of the organisation called The Wildlife Trusts? [Yes / No]
Question 6.	Which site have you most enjoyed visiting and why?
Question 4.	Why do you think The Wildlife Trusts exist and what is their main function?
Question 10.	In the space below, please feel free to make any further comments on your views of the educational work of The Wildlife Trusts, e.g. what they should be engaged in, what you think they are engaged in, and how successful you think they are at helping to make biodiversity relevant to people.

5.4.2.5 Documentation

Data were collected from documentation in addition to the interviews and questionnaires. Literature from books, journals and conference reports was gathered to form three chapters of literature review for the thesis. The choice of literature was made in order to compliment the empirical investigations and address the thesis' two core research questions. Another vital form of documentation was that which was provided by the Trusts and may be divided into two categories.

Firstly documentation was requested from Trusts for the commissioned review. This included lists or handbooks of nature reserves, minutes and agendas from recent Wildlife Trust education committee meetings or equivalent. Secondly, a good deal of helpful and un-requested documentation was willingly provided, including: educational material produced by National Office; Annual Reviews; Trust magazines and newsletters; development, management or business plans; educational strategies; school packs or resources; other Educational packs and general publicity or information material distributed to the general public.

5.4.2.6 Field notes and personal observations

Field notes and personal observations provided another source of data. The author recorded notes and observations throughout the period of data collection. These included notes made during attendance at a Wildlife Trusts conference; notes made during regional and Biodiversity awareness group meetings; personal impressions gained on making first contact with Trusts; notes from telephone calls; general impressions after visiting Trusts; notes made on informal visits to reserves and sites and all written, facsimile and email communications.

5.4.3 Explanation for choice of data sources

So far, each source of data for the study has been introduced and explained with little justification as to why it was chosen and why other sources were rejected. Firstly, this sub-section clarifies why interviewing was chosen as a method. Secondly, the choice of semi-structured interviewing with personnel across all Trusts is defended, as is the second stage of interviewing with twelve education staff. 5.4.3 goes on explain the choice of questionnaires for the study and then justify use of documentation and field-notes.

5.4.3.1 Interviewing

The majority of data from The Wildlife Trusts was collected by means of interview. It might be suggested that information from such a large number of locations might have been collected by means of postal, email or telephone surveys. These methods have the advantage of being less costly in finance and time, yet there are great risks of low response or refusal through non-contact with participants (Denscombe 1998:10; Mc Neill 1990:40). It was anticipated that the detail of the data received through survey without interview would be insufficient in depth for either the education review or the doctoral case study. As the researcher did not intend to sample all personnel within each Trust, the potential advantages of a survey's capacity to gain a wide and plentiful data set from numerous personnel were of no benefit. Unlike questionnaires, the researcher's interview schedules were not designed to limit Wildlife Trust personnel responses. Rather, the method of interviewing was selected for its power to generate data of depth rather than breadth in The Wildlife Trusts case study.

Denscombe's (1998:110-111) discussion of interviews enables further justification for the author's choice of interview use. The need for data collection to investigate the experiences and feelings of Trust personnel is one reason why interviews were chosen. A particular example is the core interview question number 20, which asks personnel to express the main obstacle to progress with educational work. Such an issue can be investigated most effectively with a face-to-face interview that is able to establish rapport and trust between the interviewer and participant. The remaining core interview questions were also most appropriately addressed through face-to-face discussion, in order to provide plentiful detail.

The additional in-depth interviews with education staff benefited from being conducted in a 'second stage' of interviewing as follow up interviews. They allowed more personal subject matter to be discussed, having built up a relationship between interviewer and participant whilst addressing the core questions. A criticism of in-depth interviews is that they are based, as within this case study, on small samples.

They are also criticised for relying too greatly on anecdotal data, in a way that standardised interviews do not (Baxter and Eyles 1997: 508). However, the author of this thesis was able to note that, during the 12 in-depth interviews '...concepts emerged from conversation which allowed the reconstruction of meanings through narratives or stories' (Baxter and Eyles 1999:308). These interviews were recorded on tape and careful notes were taken in order to capture meanings.

Negative aspects of interviewing are detailed by Yin (1994:80). There are potential risks associated with generating biased responses if interviews are poorly constructed. Firstly this was addressed by following Fontana and Freys' (2000:556) advice for good interview practice. Secondly, the matrix in Figure 7 on page 124 can demonstrate how interview questions directly relate to the thesis overall research aims. However, the choice of the in-depth interview questions addressed to the 12 education staff is not self-explanatory and merits further attention.

So far in this methodology chapter, the use of the in-depth questions has been introduced in terms of the questions' capacity to address one of the research's overall aims. That aim is to determine what is the educational culture within The Wildlife Trusts. In addition, the 12 in-depth interviews were used, in conjunction with literature and the thesis' other empirical findings, to understand how the culture of The Wildlife Trusts' education is influenced by Trust educational staff's concern about wildlife and the environment.

It is necessary to explain reasons for asking the 12 educational staff how they came to their positions within The Wildlife Trusts and why they work with the Trusts. In asking these questions, the author aimed to discern something of the organisation's educational culture in terms of: the education staff's perceptions of their own roles, their opinions of the Trusts' educational work and what previous experiences led them to their roles.

It was intended that similar information would be acquired from several questions concerning staff's biographical details, namely their job titles, descriptions and previous work. In addition, these questions aimed to illustrate the extent to which staff saw their roles as educational. Questions about staff ages and urban/rural residency existed more to provide a clear profile of the interviewees rather than for information about the culture of the Trusts' educational work.

Details of staff's educational backgrounds and engagement in environmental activities were requested for two reasons: firstly so as to present information concerning the past and present environmental experiences of educators within The Wildlife Trusts. Secondly it was intended for this information to be compared with other research literature concerned with understanding the formative experiences of environmental educators, who may be considered as something of a desired 'end-product' of successful environmental education. It seems important here to justify why the interviewees were asked to reveal the nature of their concern about wildlife. This part of the interviewing was carried out in order to understand how the personal concerns of educational staff compare with The Wildlife Trust's educational aims and activities as revealed by other areas of this study's empirical research.

5.4.3.2 Questionnaires

The use of questionnaires to gather part of the study's data is defended on a number of accounts. Most of the questionnaires used in this research were collected without direct contact between research and the participant. The use of Wildlife Trust personnel and help from Durham County Council enabled the researcher to reduce administration time spent on the questionnaire and devote more time to its design and data collection using other methods. Only with the student sample did the researcher administer questionnaires. Denscombe (1998:88) outlines contexts when questionnaire use is appropriate. These contexts were considered in the case of this study and accordingly it was decided that questionnaires were appropriate. Firstly it was intended to gain as many responses as possible to the questions asked of Trust visitors and members of the public with an interest in environmental issues. Secondly the geographically widespread location of the Trusts directed the researcher to questionnaire use. Thirdly the questions to be asked of the visitors and independent sample matched Denscombe's (1998:88) notion of relatively 'straightforward' 'brief' and 'uncontroversial' questions about participants' experiences and interactions with The Wildlife Trusts. Such questions do not necessarily require face-to-face interviews. Finally, there was sufficient time available for the researcher to experience the time delays and costs associated with questionnaire use.

5.4.3.3 Documentation

Yin (1994:80) explains that documentation is helpful to the researcher, providing 'stable' information of exact details. Another strength of documentation is that it is also able to cover broad sets of contexts. For example, documents provided by The Wildlife Trusts included material intended for visitor use and also that used as internal documentation; documents beyond those directly associated with education were also available for the researcher.

The choice of academic literature as a form of documentation has already been explained in 5.2.2. The chief purpose behind using other materials provided by The Wildlife Trusts was to support the author's understanding of interview discussions, for example to clarify the nature of The Wildlife Trusts' educational activities, clubs and events. Particularly useful Wildlife Trust documentation included a list of membership figures for the children's club Wildlife Watch and a business plan that supported interview data. Such documentation can therefore be used together with interview data as part of a data triangulation process (discussed further in 5.6.3.1). In this way, use of documents to support interview data was intended to, as Stake (2000:443) suggests 'reduce the likelihood of misinterpretation' and use '...multiple perception to clarify meaning, verifying the repeatability of an observation or interpretation'.

5.4.3.4 Field notes

The author used field notes or recorded personal observations as a supplementary data source. A primary reason to make written field notes immediately after phone calls, Trust visits and meetings was to 'get an overall feel' for the situation associated with The Wildlife Trusts' educational work (Denscombe 1998:150). The process of recording field notes gave the author opportunity to triangulate these notes with interview and questionnaire data. In particular, issues and problems associated with

delivery of education became a visible theme in the author's notes. These were used to support other evidence of problems reported in Chapter 6's subsection 6.3.2 entitled 'Weaknesses', where direct extracts from field notes are included. Finally, one additional benefit of field notes was in enabling the practice of researcher reflexivity. The author used field notes to acknowledge her position in the research process and to observe participants' reactions to her presence in the Trusts. It was also realised that field notes enabled the author to become aware of her biases. For example the author's perceptions could be checked against interview data and presence of misunderstandings or biases could be identified.

Section 5.4.3 has aimed to justify reasons for selecting four data types for this doctoral study: interviews, questionnaires, documentation and field notes. The preceding section presented full description of the data collection procedure, from six sources. In 5.4.1 the initial stages of data collection were explained by describing how access was gained to Wildlife Trusts sample and how the study was piloted. Section 5.5 now addresses how the data were analysed.

5.5 The Data analysis process

5.5.1 Organisation of the data

The importance of the data analysis procedure is reflected in the words of Baxter and Eyles: '...the credibility of analysis is conceptually different from the credibility of the main thesis, but the former is usually neglected in favour of the latter' (1999:315). It is intended that this section of the methodological chapter explains this thesis' data analysis so that the reader is assured of the process' credibility.

The initial process of data analysis was one of data organisation. Initial organisation of data took place during the period of data collection. Immediately before or during interview, blank sheets of paper were all labelled according to interview question and name of Wildlife Trust. This later enabled the researcher to sort separate sheets of paper according to how each response addressed each of the core research questions and areas of investigation: (i), (ii), (iii) and (a), (b) and (c) outlined in section 5.2.2.

Another stage of organisation involved sorting by data type: hand-written and tape-recorded interview records, questionnaires, documents and field-notes. Each of data types was placed into groups according to the main research objectives and questions. Chapter 6, presenting the thesis' empirical findings, reflects this organisation, although further discussion of analysis in Chapter 7, the Discussion and Conclusion chapter, leads to cross referencing of data analysis between the main research objectives; that is to say data no longer sit comfortably within the bounds of 'educational activities', 'strengths and weaknesses' or 'culture of education'.

The matching of interview questions and questionnaire questions to research objectives is outlined in Figure 7 overleaf which displays this information in a matrix.

Figure 7 Match between interviews, questionnaires and research questions

(1) What does The Wildlife Trusts, as a UK Environmental NGO do in its delivery of education? (2) What *can* The Wildlife Trusts do in its delivery of environmental education, that is to say what are its limits and potentials?					
	(i) What are the educational activities of the Wildlife Trusts?	(ii) What are the strengths and weaknesses of the Trusts' educational provision?	(iii) What is the nature of The Wildlife Trusts' educational provision as understood by the Culture of education?		
			(a) What are the differing understandings of the concept of 'education' among WT personnel?	(b) What are the hopes or ideals for The Wildlife Trusts' delivery for education?	(c) How is the Culture of The Wildlife Trusts' education provision influenced by staff?
CORE INTERVIEW QUESTION How do you run and manage this thing called education including the quality of it?	✔				
CORE INTERVIEW QUESTION Can you tell me about any other experiences provided by this Trust?	✔				
CORE INTERVIEW QUESTION What do you think should be the future of 'Watch'? Why? Should it continue? Who should run it?	✔				
CORE INTERVIEW QUESTION What do you think is the best practice of the WTs in general?		✔			
CORE INTERVIEW QUESTION What do you do best here (in this Trust)?		✔			
CORE INTERVIEW QUESTION How could you do it (what you do best) better?		✔			
CORE INTERVIEW QUESTION What do you do that has real or significant impact?		✔			
CORE INTERVIEW QUESTION What or who are the main obstacles to progress for you?		✔			

(1) What does The Wildlife Trusts, as a UK Environmental NGO do in its delivery of education? (2) What *can* The Wildlife Trusts do in its delivery of environmental education, that is to say what are its limits and potentials?					
	(i) What are the educational activities of the Wildlife Trusts?	(ii) What are the strengths and weaknesses of the Trusts' educational provision?	(iii) What is the nature of The Wildlife Trusts' educational provision as understood by the Culture of education?		
			(a) What are the differing understandings of the concept of 'education' among WT personnel?	(b) What are the hopes or ideals for The Wildlife Trusts' delivery for education?	(c) How is the Culture of The Wildlife Trusts' education provision influenced by staff?
CORE INTERVIEW QUESTION What does 'education' mean in the context of The Wildlife Trusts?			✔		
CORE INTERVIEW QUESTION Who is education aimed at?			✔		
CORE INTERVIEW QUESTION How would you wish to see education defined?			✔		
CORE INTERVIEW QUESTION What would you do if you had a blank slate for education?				✔	
IN DEPTH INTERVIEW QUESTIONS How staff came to their positions within the WTs					✔
IN DEPTH INTERVIEW QUESTIONS The nature of staff concern about wildlife					✔
IN DEPTH INTERVIEW QUESTIONS Influences upon staff concern					✔
IN DEPTH INTERVIEW QUESTIONS Biographical details					✔
QUESTIONNAIRE TO VISITORS What do you consider to be the best aspects of your present visit here?		✔			

(1) What does The Wildlife Trusts, as a UK Environmental NGO do in its delivery of education? (2) What *can* The Wildlife Trusts do in its delivery of environmental education, that is to say what are its limits and potentials?					
	(i) What are the educational activities of the Wildlife Trusts?	(ii) What are the strengths and weaknesses of the Trusts' educational provision?	(iii) What is the nature of The Wildlife Trusts' educational provision as understood by the Culture of education?		
			(a) What are the differing understandings of the concept of 'education' among WT personnel?	(b) What are the hopes or ideals for The Wildlife Trusts' delivery for education?	(c) How is the Culture of The Wildlife Trusts' education provision influenced by staff?
QUESTIONNAIRE TO VISITORS Can you think of any ways in which your present visit could be made more interesting and rewarding?		✔			
QUESTIONNAIRE TO VISITORS Why do you think the WTs exist and what is their main function?		✔			
QUESTIONNAIRE TO PUBLIC SAMPLE Have you heard of the organisation called the WTs?		✔			
QUESTIONNAIRE TO PUBLIC SAMPLE Which site have you enjoyed visiting and why?		✔			
QUESTIONNAIRE TO PUBLIC SAMPLE Why do you think the WTs exist & what is their main function?		✔			
QUESTIONNAIRE TO PUBLIC SAMPLE Further comments on the WTs' educational work		✔			

The first stages of analysis of core interview questions entailed use of reflective notes in the margins of hand-recorded responses. This aided identification of similar patterns of response (Miles and Huberman 1994:9). For the additional in-depth interviews with the 12 educational staff, tape recordings were transcribed and notes were added to draft transcripts to aid later coding. Notes on transcripts, field notes and Trust documentation subsequently used the technique of cross-referral to show where related data could be located. With both sets of interviews the reliability was addressed through all stages of analysis being carried out by the sole interviewer,

who was best placed to capture meanings embedded in the hand recorded and tape recorded responses.

Before the process of coding and categorisation of data, decisions were made concerning how the core interview responses would be used for analysis. For most of the core interview data Trust-responses rather than individual personnel responses were used and recorded in analysis. This meant that the number of Trusts with at least one response per category would be recorded. It was decided that analysis would be done this way because of the need to represent each Trust in the partnership over and above representing individual answers. An emerging goal of investigation was to understand the extent to which opinions were held across the partnership. If individual responses were the focus of analysis the data might be distorted by those Trusts with more personnel working in the Trust and/or present in the interview. It was anticipated that there would be more than one individual in one Trust who would respond with answers in one category; and this was the case. Multiple responses in one category were only counted as one response per Trust, in order to gain a Trust-representative response. This is discussed further in section 5.6.2.4.

In practice, there were some exceptions to the researcher's plan to take Trust-responses only. Data collected about educational activities were plentiful and every educational activity mentioned was recorded and presented for analysis; hence individual responses were at the heart of this piece of analysis. Individuals' responses were also important in investigating strengths and weaknesses of Trusts' educational work. They were used for analysis of the question about Trusts' best practice and were recorded in addition to Trust responses. This was partly because there were so many cases of best practice offered per Trust and partly because another 'level' of analysis was thought prudent. This course was also taken because interviews and early data analysis revealed some differences between individuals' opinions among educators and directors.

It was decided that questionnaire data would be analysed by keeping the responses from visitors and non-visitors (i.e. the independent sample) separate. Also the responses from the two groups within the independent sample (students and Local Authority Forum members) were analysed separately. The researcher expressly wished to identify any differences or patterns amongst the opinions by different groups of the independent sample.

5.5.2 The coding procedure

5.5.2.1 Coding defined

The primary method of data analysis used in this study was a procedure of manual coding of all data sources. Although manual coding is time consuming, the benefits of this process outweighed the benefits of using computer software for qualitative research, such as ATLAS/ti or NUDIST; computer-aided coding would have required a lengthy process of transferring all hand written data for the core interviews into a computer database.

Coding is described as:

> ...analysis. To review a set of field notes transcribed of synthesised, and to dissect them meaningfully, while keeping the relations between the parts intact, is the stuff of analysis (Miles and Huberman 1994:56).

The author's aim to dissect text meaningfully was accomplished through reading through large sets of data, such as all responses to one interview question. Smaller 'chunks' of data were then more closely read to determine what would constitute a useful unit of analysis. Units of analysis comprised one-word answers (especially on questionnaires) through to small sentences and whole paragraphs within interview data. Codes, or categories of response, were reached chiefly through open or inductive methods associated with Grounded Theory formulated by Glaser and Straus (1967). This means that categories were sought during stages of analysis, rather than devised by the researcher at the outset. Although Grounded Theory cannot simply be encapsulated in this one description of coding, it is an important aspect of the qualitative theory and method that the author drew upon for coding. A full explanation of Grounded Theory and the tensions present among the authors of this theory may be read in Charmaz' chapter in Denzin and Lincoln (2000: 509-35).

The emergent process inherent in Grounded Theory methods was particularly present in the analysis of data concerned with educational activities. New ideas about data emerged from analysis of responses from two core questions asking specifically about educational activities ('How do you run and manage this thing called education including the quality of it?' and 'Can you tell me about any other experiences provided by this Trust?'). It became apparent from coding that one particularly set of activities – the children's club 'Wildlife Watch' – should be investigated further. Consequently the author was led to analysis of the questions concerning 'Watch' ('what do you think should be the future of 'Watch'? Why? Should it continue? Who should run it?'). Further questions arose from these responses that indicated the need for analysis of additional documentation regarding 'Watch' membership. Although this documentation on membership was not coded according to Grounded Theory methods the initial coding generated the valuable beginnings of a 'chain of theory development' (Charmaz 2000:515). In short, the researcher used inductive data analysis processes to inform subsequent stages of analysis and theory building.

5.5.2.2 Inductive and deductive methods

Having suggested that inductive coding was at the heart of this study's analysis, there were instances when more deductive methods were employed. Such methods were used for data identifying the weaknesses in educational provision. For example two core interview questions asked in each Trust revealed that responses could clearly be categorised into six categories of problems or obstacles experienced by Trusts. 'Management and organisation' formed one of six broad codes that accommodated a set of seven sub-codes. These codes and sub-codes were arrived at inductively. However, deductive coding was a procedure inherent in the analysis of a further set of weaknesses-related field note data. It became apparent that the researcher's field notes were an important source of information about the weaknesses of the Trusts' educational provision. A number of broad codes, previously defined during core interview analysis, fitted field notes. Such codes included the afore-mentioned 'management and organisation' category of response. Three of the remaining six broad codes arising from the interview data were also deemed suitable for deductively categorising the field note data corresponding to the investigations of weaknesses.

5.5.2.3 Code types

The theory behind code creation has been discussed; it is important here to explain the type of codes used and the credibility of these codes. By credibility it is meant that while codes are created as somewhat abstract labels, they must have a 'conceptual structure' and must relate as closely as possible to the original concept (Miles and Huberman 1994:64). The author's choice of code-type was one step towards the aim for credibility, but it is recognised that coding is not a fault-free method of identifying and representing real phenomena. As Kelle (1997:para3.8) explains: '...codes represent 'perspective' of the researcher rather than clear cut empirical contentful categories'.

The most useful scheme of coding that points to general types of codes is that developed by Bogdan and Biklen (1992). The types of codes listed here do not refer too specifically to content of any particular study and so were helpful for devising codes for categorising this study's qualitative data:

1. *Setting/Context:* general information on surroundings that allows you to put the study in a larger context
2. *Definition of the situation:* how people understand, define or perceive the setting or the topics on which the study bears
3. *Perspectives:* ways of thinking about their setting shared by informants ('how things are done here')
4. *Ways of thinking about people and objects:* understandings of each other, of outsiders, of objects in their world (more detailed than above)
5. *Process:* sequence of events, flow, transitions, and turning points, changes over time
6. *Activities:* regularly occurring kinds of behaviour
7. *Events:* specific activities, especially ones occurring infrequently
8. *Strategies:* ways of accomplishing things; people's tactics, methods, techniques for meeting their needs
9. *Relationships and social structure:* unofficially defined patterns such as cliques, coalitions, romances, friendships, enemies
10. *Methods:* problems, joys, dilemmas of the research process – often in relation to comments by observers
    (cited in Miles and Huberman 1994:61).

It seems helpful to illustrate how this study's coding procedure recognised these code-types as appropriate for use in data analysis. Examples are presented here from each of the three aspects of investigation concerning (i) educational activities; (ii) strengths and weaknesses and (iii) the educational culture of the Trusts. Examples are not exhaustive but are intended to provide a depiction of how this study's coding system works within one such as that created by Bogdan and Biklen (1992):

(i) Educational activities

Responses to the two core interview questions about educational activities can be defined under the above code labels of *Activities; Events; Strategies.* For example educational activities fell under 8 major categories, including 'community activities', 'activities for members, volunteers and other adults' and 'Wildlife Watch work'. Community activities included activities that were coded under such sub-codes as 'churchyard wildlife projects', 'park regeneration' and 'wildlife gardening promotion'.

(ii) Strengths and weaknesses

Interview questions associated with strengths of the Trusts' educational provision included questions about perceived best practice, both across the Wildlife Trust Partnership and within individual Trusts. The initial set of codes to denote all the best practices were numerous and, like the educational activities were code-types of: *Activities, Events and Strategies.* For example 'reserve management' was used as a code to label texts wherever personnel spoke of reserve management as an activity perceived to be done well. The 'reserve management' code included text such as: 'We manage land in an exemplary manner'; 'Management of our 80 reserves is getting better'; '...acquisition of land and its management is an area we excel in'. Such a code is also applied to cases where people are providing what Bogdan and Biklen (1992) would label as *Definition of the situation.*

The *Definition of the situation* code-type was also used in analysis of the responses concerning significant impact of educational work. One code was labelled as 'Don't know/Difficult to judge'. This code was used to categorise responses where people expressed difficulty in judging what Wildlife Trust work had real impact upon people. Such a code for response fits into the code-type *Method*, where interviewees gave their views about the research method and their dilemmas on what might said in response to the interviewer's question.

Questionnaire responses, that revealed weaknesses in the Trusts' educational work, were often coded according to *Perspectives.* The independent sample was asked for further comments on the work of The Wildlife Trusts. Respondents offered perspectives that were categorised as 'neglecting people', where perhaps Trusts were seen to be concentrating too much upon looking after wildlife. For example one response coded in this way was: 'The Wildlife Trusts should get more involved with community projects, raising awareness in the community of the local habitats and wildlife and making people feel that this is relevant to them'.

(iii) Educational culture

An example of the code-type *Ways of thinking about people and objects* was a category of response labelled 'Education defined in relation to other Trust work'. This category of response depicted Trust personnel's perceptions of the 'fuzzy' boundaries between the work of education and other staff. Responses in this category included comments such as: ' In this organisation we would like to see education as a way of doing the conservation job' and 'Conservation officers cover campaigning. It's difficult to find a dividing line'. This code also included responses demonstrating an unwillingness to view education as a separate entity.

Process codes were very much evident in analysis of in depth interviews with education staff. In particular these sorts of codes were assigned to responses regarding memorable experiences that had been influential in forming concern for wildlife. Staff also stated when, in their lives, they had such experiences. Three such *Process* codes were assigned to a statement from one Trust educator, who explained: 'I remember at the age of 11 in the middle of the New Forest (caravan site), sitting there thinking ' isn't this wonderful...in a completely quite glade of my own''. The codes used were 'outdoor experiences: holidays', 'memorable emotions' and 'age-phase: 8-14 years', all of which depict 'process' within this person's response.

5.5.2.4 Code sizes and characteristics

The consideration of code-types used for this study should be accompanied by further explanation of code or category sizes and characteristics. Miles and Huberman (1994:65) suggest that nesting or overlapping categories of data can be used in analysis. Indeed, this was found to be the case as initial stages of coding led to the formation of broader codes of response. One instance of this lies with the categorisation of Trusts' 'best practices'. Those responses that indicated fundraising activities to be one of the Trusts' best practices were coded as 'fundraising' initially. A second round of analysis found that all best practices could be placed into one of 8 broader categories. Accordingly 'fundraising' was nested within a broad category of 'internal organisation and management'.

As well as codes 'nesting' within each other, the coding procedure sometimes revealed that responses could bridge two categories. An example of this can be drawn from the responses to the core question 'What do you do that has significant impact upon people?' It was usual for interview responses to allude to more than one type of impact within the same answer or sentence. One education officer gave an answer: 'It takes years to hear the impact but families do return to 'Watch' [i.e. children's club] things'. This response bridged two codes used by the researcher. Firstly the response was coded under the category of 'informal education and Wildlife Watch'. Secondly the phrase fell within the code 'return of people'. Although this code does not specifically state an impact upon people, it reflects more *how* Trusts knew they were having an impact upon people; this code recurred amongst responses and therefore highlighted a recognisable pattern in the data.

The discussion of the coding procedure used in this study is connected with how codes are *presented* to the reader. The third and final section of 5.5 is concerned with explaining the author's choices of data presentation.

5.5.3 Data presentation

Display or presentation of data is different from the analysis of data, but it is clear that they must closely be linked. A key role of data display is to ensure that data are not misrepresented or distorted (Denscombe 1998:190). This sub-section aims to state and defend how data are presented in this thesis.

Data were analysed and presented in the Findings chapter of this thesis by separating the data into three groups. Each group coincided with the three areas investigating (i) educational activities, (ii) educational strengths and weaknesses and (iii) the educational culture of The Wildlife Trusts. Figure 8 (page 132) tabulates a summary of how analysis of each data group is presented to the reader within the Findings chapter. It is intended that section 5.3 should be read in conjunction with Figure 8.

Figure 8 Data presentation for individual data groups used in the study

	1 All individual responses listed?	2 Responses refer to Partnership or individual Trusts?	3 Responses are from Trusts or individual people?	4 Responses are ranked?	5 Responses are shown in tables or charts?	6 Categories of response are described?	7 Direct quotations or observations presented?	8 Size and number of categories	9 Questions are combined for analysis & data presentation?
A **(i) Educational activities: Activities**	Yes	Mostly individual	Both	Yes	Yes – tables: (i) showing all activities (ii) all categories; (iii) categories of response re 'Watch'	Yes	Yes	42 reported types of activity within 8 broad categories	Yes
B **(ii) Strength & Weaknesses: Best practices**	Yes	Both	Both – individuals are shown according to Trust personnel roles	Yes	Yes – (i) pie chart for large categories (ii) tabled responses according to role of respondent	Yes	Yes	430 individual activities; 8 broad categories; 20 'Watch' categories	Yes
C **(ii) Strengths & Weaknesses: Significant Impact**	No, but all responses alluded to in category description	Both	Trust responses	Yes	Yes – significant impacts tabled for each Trust	Yes	Yes	14 broad categories of significant impact	No
D **(ii) Strengths & Weaknesses: Questionnaires**	No	Both	Individual responses	Yes	Yes – bar charts:(i) visitors' best aspect of visits (ii) forum's best aspect of visit (iii) students' best aspect of visit.	Yes	Yes	7 categories for visitors' responses; 7 for forum; 5 for students' responses	No
E **(ii) Strengths & Weaknesses: Weaknesses**	No	Both	Trust responses	Yes	Yes – tables and bar chart for interview responses	Yes	Yes	23 small categories; 6 large categories	Yes

	1 All individual responses listed?	2 Responses refer to Partnership or individual Trusts?	3 Responses are from Trusts or individual people?	4 Responses are ranked?	5 Responses are shown in tables or charts?	6 Categories of response are described?	7 Direct quotations or observations presented?	8 Size and number of categories	9 Questions are combined for analysis & data presentation?
F (ii) Strengths & Weaknesses: Questionnaires	No	Partnership	Individual people	Yes	No	Yes with examples	Yes	A number of categories for strengths & weaknesses[6]	No
G (ii) Strengths & Weaknesses: fFeld notes	All examples found	Individual Trusts	N/A	No	No	Yes with examples	Yes – observations	4 broad categories	N/A
H (ii) Culture: Meaning of education	No	Partnership	Trust responses – also response according to staff role	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	7 broad categories	No
I (iii) Culture: Who ed. should be aimed at	Yes	Partnership	Trust response	Yes	Yes- 'audiences' for education are tabled	Yes – in terms of how individual responses fit within categories	No	32 individual responses' 7 broad categories	No
J (iii) Culture: How education should be defined	No	Partnership	Individual response	Yes	No	Yes with examples	Yes	7 small categories; 3 broad categories	No
K (iii) Culture: Ideals for education	No	Both – predominantly partnership	Trust response	Yes	Yes - bar charts	Yes with examples	Yes	13 categories	No
L (iii) Culture: Background experiences of education staff	Yes	N/A	Individual responses	Yes	Yes- tables for most data. Pie chart for one question.	Yes	Yes – also vignettes illustrating experiences	Large number of categories for whole data set - some nested [7]	No

[6] 7 categories of best aspect of Trust visit; 4 categories of reason for enjoying other visits; 7 and 6 categories of weakness from visitors and independent sample respectively.

[7] 8 categories of current job description; 5 categories of previous job; 7 categories of qualifications; 11 categories of environmental activities undertaken & 6 sub-categories of outdoor activity; 3 large categories of what it means to be concerned about wildlife & 9 smaller categories; 7 categories of important environmental issues; 8 categories of reasons for roles within Trusts; 5 large categories of memorable experiences & 21 smaller categories; 4 large categories of most memorable responses & 13 smaller categories; 14 categories of NGO influence; 7 categories of formal education influence.

The first column in Figure 8's summary on page 132 identifies the extent to which data were reduced for display; in some cases *all* individual Trust personnel responses were analysed and presented. This was believed necessary in order to demonstrate the breadth of a whole data set, for example *all* educational activities are displayed in the Findings chapter. As the table shows, in most cases the reader is not presented with all individual responses. Instead condensed data summaries, frequencies, quotations and vignettes are used to reduce the quantity of data the reader must assimilate.

Column two in Figure 8 identifies whether responses refer to individual Trusts or to the Wildlife Trust Partnership, it can be seen that data analysis is predominantly concerned with The Wildlife Trust Partnership.

The third column denotes that much of the data are analysed and presented as responses per Trust rather than per individual person.

Column four is concerned with ranking of responses. Data were usually presented in order ranked according to frequency of response. This was appropriate for most data, except for the author's recorded field notes that contributed to data analysis of the Trusts' educational weaknesses.

It was also appropriate for many of the analysed responses to be presented in table or chart form, as denoted by column five. After brief further explanation of Figure 8, there follows discussion surrounding the author's choice for analysing and presenting some data in quantitative form using frequencies, charts and tables.

Column six shows that all categories of response are described and explained to the reader, for each piece of data analysis.

Such category-descriptions were usually enhanced by direct quotations or observations from participants in the study (column seven). This was thought to be particularly important in data presentation as according to Baxter and Eyles (1997: 508) 'Quotations are important for revealing how meanings are expressed in the respondents' own words rather than the words of the researchers'. As column seven in Figure 8 shows, direct quotations were omitted from presentation of data concerned with The Wildlife Trusts' educational culture: 'who education should be aimed at' (row I). This was because it was possible to present all 12 participants' responses in concise form with clear categories of response that closely matched the raw data.

Column eight in Figure 8 refers to the size and number of categories used for each data set. The purpose of this information is to give the reader a clear picture of the collected raw data and the author's manner of data reduction.

Lastly, the ninth column in the table reveals the few cases where questions were combined for data analysis. For example, it was appropriate to combine data from responses to two questions asked of Wildlife Trust personnel, firstly Question 7: 'How could you do it, (i.e. what you do best), better?' and Question 20: 'What or who are the main obstacles to progress for you?' Responses from Question 7 did, in fact, reveal problems, obstacles or weaknesses in the Trusts' work rather than elicit suggestions for improvement. It was therefore thought fitting to combine both questions' responses for data analysis and presentation.

5.5.4 A qualitative - quantitative balance

It may be assumed from the table that analysis and presentation of data have used both qualitative and quantitative techniques. It must be emphasised that the *words* and *meaning* elicited from interview data were of greatest importance. The views of Miles and Huberman (1994:56) were heeded when considering data analysis and presentation: '...although words may be more unwieldy than numbers they render more meaning than numbers alone and should be hung on to throughout the analysis'. The author argues here that a combination of qualitative and quantitative data analysis called for a combination of qualitative and quantitative data presentation techniques.

There are a number of authors who have discussed the arguments and dichotomies associated with qualitative and quantitative methodologies. Burton (2000:217) suggests that case studies should include quantitative data and numerical measurement if appropriate. Miles and Huberman (1994:42) propose that qualitative data can be counted, ranked or scaled. This study has measured frequencies of response according to the advice of Denscombe (1998:192). He proposes that presenting the reader with frequencies allows for ease of data interpretation and clarifying connections between variables. Denscombe suggests that such numerical data display can present a clearer picture of connection, where data numbers are small and supported by qualitative description. A certain degree of quantitative data analysis used in this study is intended to support and verify the author's qualitative analysis. As Miles and Huberman (1994:110) point out, 'During analysis quantitative data can help by showing generality of specific observations'.

The qualitative analysis used in this study can be recognised in the matching and counting of patterns and categories, yet without the use of statistical techniques. Advanced statistical techniques were inappropriate for the rich nature of the interview responses in this study. Instead, tables, bar charts and pie charts have been used to present frequencies of response in a simple manner, appropriate for the scales of data used. Some data sets, such as those investigating the culture of the Trusts' educational practice were better presented with qualitative rich description. For example short vignettes of narrative description were chosen for presenting some of the educators' memorable experiences influencing their concern for wildlife. These vignettes, or '...rich "pockets" of especially meaningful data' were considered to be a suitable way to support the presentation of patterns of experiences amongst the educators (Miles and Huberman 1994:81).

The suitability of qualitative approaches for this work may be substantiated by the thoughts of Janesick (2000). She presents sample questions that she believes to invite qualitative approaches of inquiry, such as those questions listed below; their analogous questions within this thesis follow:

- Questions concerning the quality of given innovations or programmes (for example questions about The Wildlife Trusts' educational programmes);

- Questions regarding the meaning or interpretation of some component of the context under study (for example questions about the meaning of 'education' within the Trusts);

- Questions relating to the whole system (for example the range of questions seeking to understand The Wildlife Trusts, as a case study of an environmental NGO involved in environmental education)
  (adapted from Janesick 2000:382).

Other theories of qualitative inquiry are also relevant for this thesis. The author methodologically implements this definition from Smith-Sebasto (2000) who cites qualitative inquiry to be:

> ...multimethod in its focus involving an interpretive, naturalistic approach to its subject matter. [R]esearchers study things in their natural settings attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them (Smith-Sebasto 2000:10 cited in Denzin and Lincoln 1994:2).

Smith-Sebasto's (2000) notions of qualitative inquiry do not, however, fit this thesis in every way. The notion that qualitative work is at variance with quantitative inquiry's aptness for concise data presentation is contested here. Instead the author has chosen to allow brevity in presentation of qualitative data where appropriate and to use quantitative reporting to support more rich and comprehensive qualitative data. In this way the thesis supports Hart's (2000:38) view that qualitative approaches cannot be 'represented as a unified or even coherent field'.

Analysis for this study has taken into account that many raw data were in qualitative and descriptive rather than numerical form, and therefore required a fitting form of analysis. However, it is understood that there are hazards for the researcher who relies on the perceived meaningfulness and transparency of qualitative data, which can be '...evocative, illuminating, masterful and wrong' (Miles and Huberman 1994:262). In short, the author proposes that it is a *combination* of qualitative and qualitative analysis and data presentation that enables this study's findings to be clarified interpreted and validated.

5.5.5 Theory building

Within section 5.5, early processes of data analysis have been explained. The important procedure of coding has been detailed in this section whilst codes and code building have been defined and explained according to how they were implemented in this study. This thesis' data presentation techniques have been described and defended. The balance between use of qualitative and quantitative analysis and presentation techniques has been addressed (and is mentioned further in section 5.6.5.5).

Before the next section addresses strengths and weaknesses of this thesis' methodology design and implementation, it remains to explain how the author generated theories at various stages of data gathering right through to generating the conclusions that are presented in the thesis' final chapter.

Reflection upon Grounded Theory (Strauss and Glazer 1967) assisted the author in generating theories from the data through using techniques of gathering rich data and analysing through open coding. The discovery of data-induced hypotheses or propositions is an important element of Grounded Theory used in this thesis. However, the entire basis of Grounded Theory is not suitable for this work for several reasons. Firstly, this study's methodology did not include the Grounded

Theory practice of gathering more data from informants as the concepts and categories developed (Ryan and Bernard 2000:783).This was reasoned to be impractical considering the number of participants and the length of interviews. Secondly, this thesis rejects the more objectivist elements of Grounded Theory proposed by Strauss and Corbin (1998:85) who suggested boldly that 'the data do not lie'.

Practical processes of theory building for this thesis comprised a number of stages. The author began by determining precisely how interview and questionnaire questions, documentation and field notes addressed the study's two core aims and three associated aspects of the Trusts' work investigated. Units of analysis were then determined, from single words, phrases and paragraphs through to repeated themes within each data set. In the final chapter presenting the thesis' Discussion and Conclusions, theories were built as the author found ideas and patterns emerging from analysis *across* the research questions and across the three areas of data concerning educational activities, strengths and weaknesses and educational culture. Dominant themes and theories were established through continually returning to the thesis' core questions then by interpreting the empirical findings in the light of reviewed literature.

5.6 Methodological issues and limitations

5.6.1 The place of the researcher within the study

This first sub-section of 5.6 discusses important aspects of the researcher's place within this doctoral study. It is explained how a number of important methodological issues have been addressed: objectivity, subjectivity, reflexivity, bias and ethics. The author proposes that these issues are inter-linked and attention to one necessitates attention to another.

5.6.1.1 Objectivity and subjectivity

Objectivity is often regarded as a goal of empirical research. Objectivity is considered, by Miles and Huberman (1994:277-80) to be likened to the quality of 'confirmability' found in research that is free from the researcher's bias. This study tackled the issue of objectivity by firstly noting that the reality investigated by one researcher's empirical study is almost certainly subjective. There is a need to recognise that researcher and participants are almost never 'joined together' to somehow collectively represent the truth (Hammersley 1992 cited by Baxter and Eyles 1999:515). Such an idea is also confirmed by the words of Fontana and Frey (2000:663) who recognise that as researchers '...we are trying to realise that we cannot lift the results of interviews out of the context in which they were gathered and claim them as objective data with no strings attached'.

It is not the intention of this thesis to discuss the views and processes by which social reality may be constructed, however it must be noted that the paradigms of constructivism and interpretivism are of some relevance to the design of this study's methodology. It is accepted that all research is interpretive (Lincoln and Guba 2000:166-168); indeed so is this work, with its interests in interpreting *perspectives* of its participants rather than an *objective* reality. This thesis is also concerned to understand how the 'world' of The Wildlife Trusts and the organisation's education

is constructed from the point of view of those who are involved in the delivery of education. This epistemological aim is close to that of supporters of constructivism and interpretivsm (Schwant 1994:18). In this manner of thinking the text, created from questioning those organising and exposed to the Trusts' education, is used and understood as a means to understanding these people's experiences.

Claims of objectivity within this study are only made with recognition of 'strings attached' or certain conditions associated with data collection. The author agrees with the view of Hamel et al (1993:53) who suggest that 'We must be aware that the most rigorous objectivity is only possible through the most intrepid subjectivity'. Subjectivity in research is not necessarily problematic and where 'subjectivity' is understood to reflect the inherently *personal* position of a researcher, this personal and reflexive aspect of investigation may actually result in greater freedom from researcher-bias. The author believes that prevention of certain biases were possible for this study and where they were not prevented, *recognition* of personal biases was a beneficial and valuable part of the process of researcher reflexivity.

5.6.1.2 Researcher reflexivity

For this study, methods of reflexivity were employed by the researcher to tackle real and potential biases within the study. Smith-Sebasto (2000:15) explains how good practice in environmental education research is carried out if '...a researcher should acknowledge her/his personal characteristics and divulge them openly and honestly'. During the data collection process, the author took time immediately after the Trust visits to write field notes and personal observations. These notes contained reflections of the author's personal characteristics and behaviours during interviews, in addition to observations made about the research participants, surroundings and interactions. One example of personal observation included notes on how friendliness and humour during interview could influence, sometimes positively and sometimes negatively, the interviewees' manners of response (as discussed by Stroh 2000:205/6). It was then useful for the researcher to be aware of how individual interview style may have an impact upon the resulting interview findings.

Reflections were made in accordance with the suggestions of Hart (2000:43) who highlights the importance of the researcher's personal history, class, ethnicity and assumptions. It became apparent that the author's characteristics closely conformed to those of the participants in the study. Like the author many were white, 'middle-class' and with a clear interest in the environment. Such reflexivity is valuable here for two reasons. Firstly these characteristics of the researcher could be considered to be helpful in gaining easy interview access and potentially good interview rapport (as discussed in 5.4.1). Secondly, judgements about the characteristics of the participants and of the researcher are potentially contributory to a kind of bias, in themselves. This bias might arise from a mistaken perception of empathy and connection between the researcher and the researched, which could influence the results. It is hoped that the emphasis of this issue, and the recognition that the reader is *not expected* to share the researcher's or participants' personal characteristics, will go some way towards attending to issues of objectivity/subjectivity, bias and reflexivity.

5.6.1.3 Ethical research

Issues of ethics are addressed here as it is thought that research of acceptable quality can only be created and presented if ethical issues are addressed through a process of researcher-reflexivity. According to Stake (2000), this study has inherent ethical qualities in the very fact that it is a case study. Stake states that 'Case study is a part of scientific methodology but its purpose is not limited to the advance of science' (Stake 2000:447-448). This is, however, not sufficient to guarantee the ethics of the study.

Case studies customarily involve a process of making appropriate decisions regarding disclosure of participant identities. This case study of The Wildlife Trusts' educational work did not raise any questions regarding disclosure of the identity of the actual case. The organisation was already in agreement that a review of its educational work should be undertaken. Each Trust was presented with the aims of the education review, by way of written Terms of Reference at the start of the study. Before individual interviews, participants were presented with the verbal information about the doctoral research. Yin's (1994:143-144) consideration of identity-disclosure is useful for case study researchers. For this case study, disclosure of participants' individual and Wildlife Trust identities was dealt with in the following way: For the education review, participants were informed before each meeting that no person or Trust would be named in the report except in cases where best practice would be reported. For the doctoral study, a similar ethic was adhered yet no participants' real names are reported in the thesis at any time. For purposes of data analysis the real names were used right up to the stage of final write-up, to ensure that the researcher could continue to recall interviews as clearly as possible.

During the interviews themselves, the researcher was aware of the need for ethical practice. The relationship between interviewer and participant has already been mentioned in terms of the potential benefit and indeed bias associated with the some of the researcher's personal characteristics 'fitting' with those of The Wildlife Trusts participants. The researcher's approach for creating a positive relationship with those interviewed was considered to be important throughout the research. Indeed Hart (2000:42) suggests that for qualitative environmental education research: 'Relationships are paramount, so the ethics of the inquiry becomes as important as validity and reliability are in quantitative work'. This doctoral study aimed to secure good relationships with participants for ethical purposes. In this way severe problems could be avoided, such as participants feeling manipulated by in depth interviews or feeling like objects of research rather than participants (Fontana and Frey 2000:662). No problems like this were evident during data collection, although occasional discomfort was noted among one or two education officers who were concerned that interviews were 'auditing' their work. This was resolved by further clarification of the purpose and means of reporting the education review and doctoral study. It must be confirmed that access to the data used in this doctoral research was always obtained with the permission of the Trusts.

5.6.2 Methodological limitations

Some of the limitations of this study have already been raised in the previous subsection 5.6 that discusses how the researcher's place within the study may contribute to flaws in the research. In addition there are other weaknesses of methodology specific to this study.

5.6.2.1 The sample

To begin with, the author recognises weaknesses associated with the methods of sample selection (described in 5.3.2). The informants for this study were selected by the criteria to bound the data collection for the education review and for the case study; that is to say the study focussed upon seeking to interview education staff and directors. Some conservation, marketing and other personnel were involved in interviews at 7 Trusts. However, because the study only sought to interview education personnel and directors, the study may be limited by omitting the majority of what Yin (1994:149) calls 'major actors' within the case study. The conservation personnel within The Wildlife Trusts could be considered to be major actors in the Trusts' educational work.

A potential disadvantage in excluding potential 'major actors' from interviews is the lack of evidence that those not interviewed have similar or dissimilar stories and responses from those people selected for interviews. By a similar argument, a more comprehensive study might have sought to ask interview or survey questions from a wider section of the population. Instead of questioning a biased public sample, a wider study might have attempted to see how The Wildlife Trusts reach the 'every day person'. Additional biases were present within the public sample, since those questionnaires given out at Durham University and by Durham County Council might have reached respondents with greater contact with the Trusts of Durham, Northumberland and Teesside. Therefore public-sample-questionnaire comments might be reflective of these Trusts rather than the partnership as a whole.

Such disadvantages may be defended, by maintaining that the samples were not chosen for their representativeness or typicality. Rather they were chosen to ensure the maintenance of a 'logical relationship' between the characteristics of the thesis research questions and the case study sample. The questions about education activities, strengths and weaknesses of education provision and culture of education within The Wildlife Trusts were assumed to logically be related to the chosen sample of those directly involved in educating and managing education, rather than those more peripheral to educational work.

The existence of group interviews within the study sample may be considered to be problematic. Firstly, the study set out only to have one-to-one interviews with educators and directors. The later inclusion of group interviews arose when Trust personnel arrived at the interview prepared to answer questions as a group. It was then decided, during data collection, to accept the inclusion of group interviews within the doctoral study. Fontana and Frey (2000:651) suggest that group interviews aid the process of triangulation by adding to the sources of research technique and data type. Additionally the group interview may be stimulating for participants. However the 'group culture' may interfere with individuals' own responses (Fontana and Frey 2000:652). The benefits of triangulation and the fact that the researcher flexibly responded to individual Trust settings for data collection are thought to outweigh the disadvantages of using group interview data.

Constraints to this study have existed predominantly in the difficulties gaining a totally consistent sample for interviews at all the Trusts. For example, results were not directly comparable where different people with different roles were present at interview, where length and depth of answers varied from person to person or from group to group. It was also recognised that those interviewed did not always

describe the full variety and detail of educational activities. It is in such an instance that the triangulation of methods gave advantage; the use of additional documentation was able to supplement interview data. It was however interesting to consider who omitted details and why.

5.6.2.2 Data collection techniques

There are recognisable weaknesses in the thesis' data collection techniques. For example the final response rate from the questionnaires handed to Trust visitors was low. Authors writing on methodology, such as McNeill (1990:40) state that response rates for questionnaires reach only 30% or 40% compared with 70% to 80% for face to face interviews. The use of questionnaires posed further problems in that those Trust personnel involved in questionnaire distribution introduced some bias. There was no way to judge whether questionnaire responses were representative of Trust visitors' views. This might have been tackled through use of clearer guidelines to Trusts on how best to distribute questionnaires randomly and effectively. Overall, there are arguments for the validity in research techniques that led to only 6 of 45 Trusts achieving a return of 40 questionnaires in total. This in itself may be considered a valid finding and potentially reflective of the Trusts' negative and/or defensive reaction to seeking outside views of their education provision. The use of questionnaires may be defended in that they were chosen to *supplement* the chief data collection via face-to-face interviews.

Limitations were discerned with several other aspects of data collection techniques. Firstly, for greater rigour, the researcher might have re-visited Trusts later on in the research process. This would have been useful to gain verification from respondents, to check that their responses had not been misinterpreted or represented (Baxter and Eyles 1997:507). This is a process that Baxter and Eyles, in later work, refer to as 'member-checking' (1999:314). A second round of visiting each Trust posed difficulties of geography and time. The locations of all 46 Trusts around the British Isles precluded more visits given the time and finances available for data collection.

If time for the study were limitless then other constraints of the study might have been avoided. For example, it is recognised that the study may be weakened by omission of some of the data available to answer the research questions. Yin (1994:123) proposes that a good case study will use *all* the data available. The education review generated a great deal more data than was selected for analysis in the doctoral study. The author chose to select data on the basis of how they addressed the three research areas, rather than cover the wider aspects of enquiry associated with the review. This hoped-for 'tightness' in the link between research questions and data is thought to provide justification for exclusion of certain interview questions and responses that might otherwise be viewed as extra evidence.

5.6.2.3 Data analysis

Neglect of Yin's (1994) suggestion for case-study triangulation can be considered to be a flaw in this thesis' methodology. The term triangulation should be understood as '...a process using multiple perception to clarify the meaning, verifying the repeatability of an observation or interpretation' and it serves to reduce the 'likelihood of misinterpretation' (Stake 2000:443). Where both Yin (1994) and Denzin (1978) propose that a useful triangulation technique is the use of different

evaluators or researchers, this Wildlife Trust case study used only the author as one single researcher who collected and analysed data.

The single researcher taking the role of the interviewer may benefit the study, because s/he is the person who helped construct the interview text and the person who is in the best position to take into account the subtleties of the interview (Baxter and Eyles 1999:514). The author asserts that the reliability of this study is enhanced by the consistency provided by the single researcher's data collection. Specifically, this consistency means that the study would be most likely to give the same results if the research process were repeated.

5.6.2.4 Data presentation

An additional weakness in the study's methodology is one of data presentation. Data display might have been simpler and possibly more precise. One case where this evident, is in the representation of responses from the interview question asking Trust personnel about best practices. The question was analysed and reported in the first instance so that responses from particular personnel could be recognised. It was also intended that responses per Trust could be identified and counted. No matter how many individuals gave the same response within an individual Trust, only one response per Trust was recorded. Another way to represent 'Trust-responses' may have been to present the reader with *proportion*s of response. For example one person's response within a Trust interview comprising six people might be represented as one sixth of a Trust response. This method of data representation was not used for several reasons. Firstly, an intention to use proportions seems too concerned with representativeness for this case study. Secondly, group interviews usually generated unified response amongst individual participants, so to count one individual's response as a Trust-response should not be misleading for the reader. Thirdly, most interviews were in fact with individuals and not groups.

5.6.3 Methodological strengths

5.6.3.1 Use of triangulation

Whilst one triangulation processes has been omitted from this study, other triangulation processes were used to clarify meaning and support findings. This study exhibits what Yin (1994) calls 'construct validity', that is to say the case study demonstrates triangulation through use of multiple sources of evidence: formal one-to-one interviews; group interviews; in-depth interviews; questionnaires with visitors and other independent samples, as well as secondary documentation and field notes. Section 5.4.2 has presented full description of these sources and Figure 8 (pages 132/3) demonstrates how data sources addressed particular research questions. Baxter and Eyles (1999:514) endorse triangulation of sources by using quotations from different respondents; this study fulfils that aim to enable data to converge in a triangulating fashion. In addition to triangulation of data sources, methods were triangulated for this study. In particular the use of both quantitative and qualitative data analysis and presentation methods are considered to be amongst the study's strengths.

5.6.3.2 *Demonstration of validity*

This study establishes some validity through triangulation of data sources and methods. The validity of a study is associated with how well a study addresses the questions it intends to answer, giving a true picture of what is studied. Validity is also thought to be linked to the notion of credibility. (Maxwell 1996:87). It is hoped that validity is present in the study's attention to credibility, that is to say the '...the degree to which a description of human experience is such that those having the experience would recognise it immediately and those outside the direct experience can understand it' (Lincoln and Guba cited in Baxter and Eyles 1999:314). The Discussion and Conclusions chapter at the end of this thesis, matches patterns, makes comparisons and considers alternative explanations, thereby offering a means for validating the study's findings. The discussion chapter also cross-references between methodological procedures and results hence presenting practice of good research validity as advocated by Yin (1994:98-99).

5.6.3.3 *Use of grounded data*

One of the chief strengths of this case study can be considered to be the 'groundedness' of the data. Firstly the case is very much grounded in the data developed through the education review, rather than being entirely socially constructed by the researcher. Secondly the majority of the research data were collected at the sites of The Wildlife Trusts. This, according to Miles and Huberman (1994:10) exhibits 'local groundedness' of the research. Miles and Huberman (1994:267) believe other attributes of a well-designed study to be the first hand and relatively 'late' collection of data. The author can verify first hand data collection for all except the questionnaire collection from the Trusts and from the Council sample. The doctoral data were indeed collected, or more precisely *collated* at a late stage in the research process, when the education review data had been collected and when the research questions, theory and methodology had developed and progressed. These attributes contribute to the research's validity.

5.6.3.4 *Demonstration of reliability*

A final point within this sub-section re-visits the principle of reliability of methods within this study. It has been stated in 5.6.2.3 that the single researcher, as data collector and analyst, has provided some research reliability. The reliability of data collection was enhanced through use of semi-structured interviews throughout the core and additional in-depth interviews. Both the core interviews and the additional in-depth interviews were based on standardised schedules and this standardisation can be said to improve the rigour of the work by intensifying the reliability of participants' memory, where unstructured interviews do not (Baxter and Eyles 1997:508). The issue of memory reliability is discussed further in subsection 5.6.4.2 that addresses influence of other studies.

5.6.4 Influential research

There are three components that make up this subsection. The first component highlights the importance of the findings from other environmental education studies, for the development of methods for this study. The second component reviews the influence of others' research methodologies upon the strategy, methods and techniques used in this study. The third component draws on influential writing

about methodology and directly leads into the chapter's final subsection discussing the theoretical framework for this study's methodology.

5.6.4.1 Research findings

Methodology design for this thesis has been more greatly influenced by findings from environmental education research than by other studies' individual methodologies. For example this thesis' investigations into the educational culture and activities of The Wildlife Trusts were to some extent influenced by the findings of Juniper's unpublished thesis: Marketing Nature Conservation – The Use of Qualitative Market Research Methods in the Promotion of the London Wildlife Trust (Juniper 1988:47-55). Potential Trust members voiced preferences for the London Wildlife Trust's image and activities. For example 'activities' were favoured above 'political lobbying' and the Trust's involvement in 'wildlife' was preferred to academic or pressure group approaches. This thesis' questions to visitors, the public and to Wildlife Trust personnel were designed with reflection upon these findings. Similarly, Mickelwright's (1986) unpublished thesis was influential. Micklewright's study, entitled Who Are Our Members? An Analysis of the Views and Attitudes of the Members of The Avon and London Wildlife Trusts, found that members' priorities for the Trusts included establishment of nature reserves and local campaigning, including education, to prevent loss of wildlife. This thesis' questions asked of Wildlife Trust personnel, visitors and of members of the public were designed so that Juniper's and Mickelwright's findings could be either verified or negated.

Additionally, literature reviewed in section 4.3 influenced the design of the in-depth interview questions for Wildlife Trust education personnel. In particular, section 4.3.2 examined the influence of socio-demographic factors, of knowledge, personality, beliefs, values and cultural influences upon the development of a 'pro-environmental disposition'[8]. A specific example of influential literature is Palmer and Suggates' (1996) study. This study, along with the research findings of others (Taschian et al 1983; Hines et al 1986/7; Inglehart and Flanagan 1987; Arcury 1990), points to the importance of the ages or stages of people's lives that are influential in developing a pro-environmental disposition. Juniper's unpublished (1988:38/9) thesis findings demonstrate how age groups of potential Wildlife Trust members may have certain characteristics. For example potential Trust members of 19-30 years may be interested in their own social responsibility, whilst 31-44 year olds may be more concerned with themselves and their families. Consequently, for this thesis the author believed it to be important to investigate the age/stage influence and significance through interview questions about the target 'audiences' for education. Also during in-depth interviews, educators were asked to detail the ages of particularly memorable experiences thought to influence their environmental concern.

5.6.4.2 Research methods

The design of the in-depth interviews with education staff was heavily influenced by the methodologies of Palmer and her colleagues (1996; 1998b; 1998c; 1999).

[8] To remind the reader, a pro-environmental disposition is a term conceived by the author to denote an individual's or a group's possession of any or all elements of positive environmental knowledge, attitude, concerns, sensitivity and/or behaviour.

Palmer's work examines people's autobiographical accounts of memorable experiences that influenced the development of their environmental concern. However the use of autobiographical accounts or interviews that rely heavily on memory are not without their problems. Fontana and Frey (2000:656) discuss issues of reliability associated with memory. Horwitz (1996:47) also points out constraints associated with such methods; she notes that participants may hold folk theories of their own psychological development. Notwithstanding the shortcomings of such methods the author decided that the benefits of in-depth interviews, drawing on memories of past experiences, outweigh the shortcomings. Palmer et al (1998a: 431) point out that accounts of memorable experiences can be 'durable and accurate'. Writings of a good many authors support this view (Neisser 1988; Conway 1990; Chawla 1994; Schwartz and Sudman 1995).

Micklewright's (1986) study used questionnaire survey methods; his study was useful in informing the author that this thesis' methods should be grounded in interview data, whilst questionnaires should provide supplementary data from Trust visitors and members of the public. This thesis' questionnaire design aimed to avoid some of the limitations of Micklewright's study. Micklewright's research questions (1986:14) narrowly assume that Wildlife Trust members are concerned with how Trust resources address species protection only. However, this thesis' questionnaire questions were designed to include questions concerning allocation of Trust resources to educational work and to other Trust work beyond species protection (see questions samples in section 5.4.3 and within Appendices A, B and C).

Juniper's (1988) study differs from Micklewright's in its use of market research philosophy; it also employs more qualitative techniques. Junipers' interest in attitudes, reactions and emotions amongst his potential Trust-member sample served to demonstrate the innovative and successful introduction of qualitative interviewing into the field of conservation research (Juniper 1988:18). The theory and practice of qualitative interview techniques were fully investigated in their suitability for this thesis' Wildlife Trust inquiry.

5.6.4.3 Methodology discourse

Influential writing *about* methodologies in environmental education research comes from Hart (2000). His writing has assisted design and implementation of this study's methodology, particularly by affirming research traditions that contribute to formation of *appropriate* methods for individual studies. Hart (2000:41-42) maintains that research methodology that is fitting and ethical is more important than methodology that has adhered to a set of 'standards' to prove that it is sound in terms of validity and reliability. Hart suggests that 'each research tradition should be evaluated in terms of how it can solve the educational problem at hand' (ibid:40).

This section concludes by highlighting the danger in aligning this piece of research with any one theory for a methodological framework. This thesis crosses boundaries associated with methodological epistemologies, paradigms or traditions. This methodology aims to be original and fitting for the overall research questions of the thesis. In wholehearted agreement with Hart, it can be stated that:

> ...methods are judged for their usefulness and for their success in producing meaning for understanding about the questions of the inquiry; they are not judged according to a standard of tautological statements and deductive logic (Hart 2000:42).

Perhaps the most useful criterion to judge the standard of this thesis' methods should be that of plausibility. That is to say the reader must judge whether the research is likely to be true given his/her existing knowledge (Hammersley 1990:61). Finally, this theoretical section concludes by highlighting the notion that the concepts behind eminent methodological theorists are there to be contemplated. The approach of Carr and Kemmis (1986) advocates that the researcher does not necessarily follow such theorists (cited in Stake 2000:445). In this way, the author acknowledges the value of contemplating theories concerning postmodernism, constructivism, interpretivism, Grounded Theory and of qualitative inquiry. These theories are relevant to the conceptual and theoretical framework of this thesis, yet do not dominate or exclude other potentially fitting theories of methodology.

5.7 Summary of Chapter 5

Chapter 5 described the processes of addressing this thesis' research questions, introducing the reader to the **Origins and Aims of Research** in 5.2, including the research's two core research questions, three associated areas of investigation and themes of the three literature chapters.

Section 5.3 provided information on the **Selection of Research Focus** for the doctoral study. The case study approach was described as especially appropriate for this study of The Wildlife Trusts' education work because of the case study's ability to address the 'how' and 'why aspects of the core research questions with sufficient description and depth. The details of case study boundaries were discussed in relation to processes of selecting the study's sample. These processes were explained with particular detail of: visits to each of The Wildlife Trust sites; use of questionnaires for visitors to Trust sites and use of questionnaires for an independent sample.

Section 5.4 presented details regarding **The Data Collection Procedure.** The initial stages of data collection were described; these stages included gaining access to The Wildlife Trust sample, arranging meetings and engaging in the research as a 'sympathetic outsider' (McNeill 1990:75). The commissioned education review of The Wildlife Trust was noted for its use in providing piloting procedures for the doctoral study. Section 5.4 also presented description of the six sets of data sources used in the study: (i) core interview questions with a variety of Trust personnel; (ii) additional in-depth interview questions with environmental education personnel; (iii) questionnaires to Trust visitors; (iv) questionnaires for an independent sample; (v) documentation and finally (vi) field notes and personal observations. Next, the choice of data sources was explained and defended.

The Data Analysis Procedure section began with explanation of early stages of data organisation during data collection. A comprehensive matrix was drawn up to illustrate how interviews and questionnaires address the doctoral study's core research questions. Coding was defined according to key writers in the field of qualitative methodology. The author's choices for inductive and deductive coding procedures were highlighted and code-types, sizes and characteristics were explained with examples relevant to this study. Section 5.5 included explanation of the distinct qualities of data presentation as compared to data analysis. The choices for data presentation were fully explained and defended with a tabulated summary of how

data analysis is presented to the reader within Chapter 6. The balance of qualitative-quantitative methodology within the thesis was defended and it was explained how data analysis led to theory building.

Section 5.6 raised the **Methodological issues and limitations** associated with this study. The place of the researcher within the study was discussed with particular reference to how this thesis acknowledges issues of: objectivity, subjectivity, reflexivity and ethical aspects of research. The study's limitations in methods of sample selection, data collection, analysis and presentation were noted and, where possible, the author's appropriate responses and solutions were presented. Methodological strengths of this study were stated, including: use of triangulation, demonstration of validity, reliability and use of grounded data. Lastly, section 5.6 clarified the influences of others' research methodologies and methodology discourse.

The next chapter presents the findings of the empirical study.

Chapter 6 Presentation of Data

6.1 Overview of Chapter 6

This chapter presents the research findings, which are organised as follows:

6.2 The educational activities provided by the Trusts
6.3 Strengths and weaknesses of The Wildlife Trusts' education provision
6.4 The educational 'culture' within The Wildlife Trusts
6.5 Summary of Chapter 6

The first three sections correspond to the three areas of empirical investigation, which have been identified in the Aims of Research (Methodology chapter, section 5.2.2 of the thesis). The three sections, together with the literature review, are intended to provide answers to the thesis' core questions outlined in the Aims of Research, namely:

(1) What does The Wildlife Trusts, as a UK environmental NGO, do in its delivery of education?
(2) What *can* The Wildlife Trusts do in its delivery of environmental education, that is to say what are its limits and potentials?

This chapter presents the research findings in the form of analysed data; full discussion that examines the empirical data findings in the light of the review of literature may be found in the Chapter 7.

6.2 The educational activities provided by the Trusts

Responses to 2 core interview questions asked during Trust visits revealed a comprehensive picture of The Wildlife Trusts' educational activities (a full list of the review questions may be found in Appendix A, page 303). The questions asked of The Wildlife Trust sample of staff and volunteers, during the author's visits were:

Question 10 How do you run and manage this thing called 'education', including the quality of it?

Question 13 Can you tell me about any other experiences provided by this Trust, that you haven't already mentioned, for example: visitor centres, information services including web pages, themed events or educational projects, Watch projects, adult training programmes, campaigns, others?

The issue of 'quality' in Question 10 was rarely addressed in responses; the descriptions of the activities themselves took precedence. Question 13 was useful for providing a picture of educational activities because it was found that asking for 'experiences provided' revealed responses that could be interpreted and analysed as educational activities. Question 13 could be considered to use leading questions; however, the use of prompts was found to be helpful in drawing a more detailed answer.

Responses to questions 10 and 13 revealed a comprehensive list of individual educational activities. The entire collection of activities described by the Trusts can be seen in Figure 9 that follows on page 150, together with the number of Trusts offering these responses. All Trusts reported more than 1 educational activity; the maximum number of activities mentioned by any 1 Trust was 18 and the minimum number 2.

Information about educational activities was also gained from responses to a third question, below, about 'Wildlife Watch' educational activities set up for children:

Question 22 What do you think should be the future of Watch? Why? Should it continue? Who should run it?

Responses to this question are addressed later in this chapter in section 6.2.3.2.

Figure 9 All reported educational activities

EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES	CATEGORY	NUMBER OF TRUSTS (n=46)
Wildlife Watch activities	Watch	37
Events for families and community	Community	33
Publicity	Publicity	30
Walks and/or talks	Members, vols, adults	28
Adult education - courses/qualifications/training	Members, vols, adults	26
Schools work, usually junior schools	Schools	25
General awareness raising projects	Community	25
Activities for targeted groups: W.I. business, farmers	Community	23
Campaigning	Publicity	22
Use of visitor centres	Centres	19
School grounds work	Schools	16
FE/HE students courses/qualifications	FE/HE	15
Magazines, newsletters	Members, vols, adults	13
INSET for school teachers	Schools	11
Watch leader training	Watch	11
Wildlife gardening promotion	Community	11
Education packs	Schools	10
Observation and recording programmes	Members, vols, adults	9
Wildlife information, (incl. telephone), service	Community	9
Secondary schools work	Schools	7
Work with special needs children	Schools	6
Pre-school or nursery activities	Schools	6
Other non-Watch informal wildlife clubs	Watch	6
Wildlife holidays/breaks/camps	Community	6
Work with 'uniform groups'	Youth	6
Reserve and sites interpretation	Publicity	6
Demonstration garden/wildlife sites	Centres	6
School holiday activity schemes	Schools	5
Student placements	FE/HE	5
Members' or volunteers' events	Members, vols, adults	5
Placement schemes for adults, eg New Deal	Members, vols, adults	5
Youth work, including existing youth groups	Youth	5
Use of specific 'study' centres	Centres	5
Fieldwork on reserves / fieldwork holidays	Schools	4
Initial teacher training	FE/HE	3
Park regeneration projects	Community	3
Churchyard wildlife projects	Community	3
'Children for Change' project	Youth	3
Other empowerment work with young people	Youth	3
Publications of books and guides	Publicity	3
Work within garden centres	Centres	3
Watch events	Watch	1

All activities were then grouped together and analysed to reveal 8 major categories that are named in Figure 10 that follow and ranked in order according to the number of Trusts that mentioned at least 1 type of activity within the category.

Figure 10 Categories of educational activities

Activities	Number of Trust Responses
1. COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES	44
2. ACTIVITIES FOR MEMBERS, VOLUNTEERS, OTHER ADULTS	43
3. WILDLIFE WATCH WORK	41
4. PUBLICITY	37
5. ACTIVITIES FOR AND IN SCHOOLS	35
6. WORK ASSOCIATED WITH 'CENTRES'	26
7. FURTHER / HIGHER EDUCATION	19
8. WORK WITH YOUNG PEOPLE	11

In order to present further details of individual educational activities listed in Figure 9 and explain how they fit into the 8 broad categories of response in Figure 10, an account of each category is presented here.

6.2.1 Community activities

The category of community activities accounted for 72% of all Trusts' activities. Community activities included all those responses that referred to activities designed for awareness raising, and often action or participation among local communities and visiting or tourist communities. Figure 11 that follows lists the number of Trusts which undertake individual educational activities within the community activities category.

Figure 11 Activities within the 'community' category.

Community Activities	Number of Trust Responses
Events for families and community	33
Awareness raising projects	25
Activities for targeted groups	23
Wildlife gardening promotion	11
Wildlife information services	9
Wildlife holidays/breaks/camps	6
Park regeneration	3
Churchyard wildlife projects	3

6.2.1.1 Events

Events for families and community were mentioned by a large proportion of Trusts, (70%), and were found to be wide ranging. Often these events took the form of themed days, perhaps focusing on a particular species, for example Bluebell Day. Events included days for appreciation of a natural resource, such as Woodcraft Day. 1 Trust organised a sensory experience of nature and outdoors called Dawn Chorus Day, held on the first Sunday in May, when outdoor breakfast and tree dressing are part of the occasion.

Despite the number of references to family/community events made by education staff, events were not always thought to be a successful area of Trust work.

Education staff demonstrated their dissatisfaction with the organisation of events. They were often described with reference to the large amounts of time dedicated to event planning, by either staff or volunteers. Sometimes there were concerns about volunteer status or tensions between who should run events as these comments from different education staff illustrate:

> Lots of organisation is involved. It's a 2-day event, with the general public on one day and then school parties are invited and reps. from woodland organisations do woodland activities. It's big on staff involvement.

> ...Not such a good events programme for adults. People don't come much to the talks. There's no profit and it takes so much staff time. Some children's events are very good, the Christmas one if we get good publicity. Family events are good but very heavy on volunteer time. We are doing two a year.

The cost of events was also shown to be a concern:

> Events are good but we don't publicise them enough...there's so much else going on in summer in Bristol. Perhaps there would be more response just outside Bristol. The Annual Nature Fair is popular; it's promoted mainly through radio. It's not money making. It never covers costs. It's mainly sponsored.

The style and purpose of events were called into question by these two education staff:

> Festival days are held on reserves to include traditional activities but also face painting, innovative Earth Education activities and drumming - it's peripheral to the environmental movement – an experiment. We don't want to exclude the traditional.

> We did have days with local groups at Graffham. It gets big numbers - about 700. We should do something here but I'm not convinced a general wildlife session does more than publicity raise. General public events ... I tend to steer clear of. I did have a keen young organiser

6.2.1.2 Awareness raising projects

The activities labelled as other 'awareness raising projects' might have been placed in the broad 'publicity' category. The responses fit better within the awareness raising category because interviews revealed that some of the projects' specific community audiences encouraged involvement or participation in conservation activities within the local community. For example 1 Trust described a 'Woodlands Initiative' whereby local people were appointed by the Parish Council to look after trees and check for illegal felling. Another example came from an urban-based Trust, which referred to a pond survey for raising awareness in the community. 5000 record cards for pond monitoring were sent to local people. Although only one quarter responded, the Trust's educational staff felt that the project encouraged people to look 'in their own back yards'.

6.2.1.3 Activities for targeted groups

The 23 Trusts that described targeted groups as a focus of educational work made references to particular audiences chosen as a target for the Trusts' communication.

These audiences do not include those which appear in other categories but others such as: Farmers – 7 trusts reported education work with this group; Landowners – 4 Trusts; Local authority groups – 4 Trusts; Businesses or industry – 3 Trusts; Women's' Institute groups – 2 Trusts; Tourist groups – 2 Trusts; Families – 1 Trust; National Childbirth Trust – 1 Trust. Additionally 1 Trust mentioned undertaking educational work with a local historical society. Only 3 out of the 23 Trusts in this list mentioned work with more than 1 targeted group.

The groups targeted were not only approached by education staff but often by conservation staff, particularly in the case of farmers and landowners:

> The landowner stuff is done by the other Assistant Manager of Conservation.

Decisions about target audiences were sometimes dealt with or influenced by trustees, as this comment from a Trust director illustrates:

> Most trustees don't see Watch as a high priority. Educating landowners is seen as best.

6.2.1.4 Wildlife gardening promotion

Wildlife gardening promotion has been labelled differently from 'work with garden centres' since it was reported to be carried out through direct and pro-active contact with individuals and groups, rather than through selling environmentally friendly products at garden centres. Wildlife gardening was described, in 3 of 11 cases as part of a 'Gardenwatch'[9] scheme. 1 Trust referred to running the scheme by means of a three year funded package. It was set up in partial response to that Trust's recent marketing review, which had revealed the need to carry out more community work. The education manager spoke of promoting Gardenwatch in a way that might reach those usually ambivalent about wildlife:

> Wildlife is too far down the agenda for real people. That's why we want to tie it with the issue of health and children. People do care about their children but they are difficult to get hold of get them interested in wildlife as a family.

Other Trusts mentioned gardening projects set up on small areas of communal land in towns, as a 'financially successful' way of 'creating action'. Another reported example was a 'Wildlife Gardens Challenge' set up as a competition among local gardeners.

6.2.1.5 Wildlife information services

There were 9 cases where Wildlife Trusts reported provision of a wildlife information service. The resourcing of this service varied greatly. Wildlife information services were found to range from simply ensuring someone was available to answer the telephone to full time employment of a wildlife information officer dealing with calls, newsletters, fact sheets and web pages for the Trust.

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[9] Gardenwatch is used by Trusts to promote '...gardening as a focus for environmental action as a means to improve people's living environment. It is targeted at people with severe mental and physical health problems'
http://www.wildlifetrusts.org/mainframe.php?section=ourwork&page=environment#Shropshire
Retrieved from the World Wide Web July 2002

Interview responses illustrated that most Trusts had no specially created wildlife information services posts. Rather, these services were performed by education officers, marketing personnel, conservationists and other members of staff or volunteers. The following education managers' comments are illustrative of this situation:

> Information is given by conservation volunteers and conservation officers – anyone will answer – it depends on the level of enquiry

> The information service is quite good and web pages and telephone lines are advertised. Key volunteers and staff are expected to answer wildlife related calls. We do have our wildlife hotline. I used to be responsible for it. Now the communications officer is – in marketing and press – an ex journalist. I write wildlife facts leaflets. She answers questions on the Internet.

Another education manager praised his Trust's web page as part of the information service. He also talked of an ecological database that was used without cost by local authorities, students and academics. This education officer spoke less positively about his Trust's telephone service and, as in the case of event organisation; this educational activity was reported as one that reaped little financial reward.

6.2.1.6 Wildlife holidays, breaks and camps

Wildlife holidays, breaks and camps were not necessarily centre-based nor were they directed at one particular group of people such as school children, Wildlife Watch clubs, members or adults. From the 6 Trusts which made reference to holidays for the local and wider community, 4 described overnight camping. The camping was usually based upon experience of the outdoors, wildlife and/or habitats. Sometimes Trusts offered experiences of wildlife at night. Such camps were usually organised with outside help of staff from schools or children's groups, families, Wildlife Watch groups and their leaders. 2 Trusts organised their activities in the form of activity holidays or residential courses. 1 of these was run as a wildlife holiday business. It was run by two volunteers, in partnership with a neighbouring Trust and covered the two counties of both the Trusts.

6.2.1.7 Park regeneration

3 Trusts reported park regeneration as an example of an educational activity. Park regeneration included: conservation work in parks, tree planting in communal areas and 'clean up' events specifically relating to parks or greens. All cases directly involved the users of the areas. 2 out of the 3 Trusts reported work in partnership with others: The Countryside Commission and City Council respectively. Each case of park work alluded to some problem for the Trusts. 1 education manager commented:

> Millennium Greens is a community activity. I resent doing this a bit, but who else would do it if I didn't?

A Trust director's opinion in another Trust revealed concerns about the results from park regeneration:

> The clean-ups and practical tree planting reaches a small number and they are always the same people.

This voluntary education officer and assistant director discussed the problems in their work:

> We had the Trust do the work on the Green... don't know what a success it was. It was on the park across the road.

> Not sure it was a huge success.

6.2.1.8 Churchyard projects

Whereas the activities associated with parks and greens were carried out in nearby urban or well-populated areas, the churchyard projects were undertaken in more rural areas and reported by 3 Trusts in a more favourable light. Members of local parishes were encouraged by Trusts to identify their churchyards as 'God's Acre', as one Trust Director put it, and then become involved in promoting wildlife in the churchyard itself.

6.2.2 Activities for members, volunteers, other adults

This second of the 8 broad categories refers to activities provided *for* members, volunteers and adults, and also those activities provided *by* these people. Figure 12 that follows states the individual activities within the category.

Figure 12 Activities within the 'members, volunteers, other adults' category

Activities for members, volunteers/ adults.	Number of Trust Responses
Walks and/or talks	28
Adult education courses, qualification and training	26
Magazines and newsletters	13
Observation and recording programmes	9
Members' or volunteers' events	5
Placement schemes	5

6.2.2.1 Walks and/or talks

Many Trusts referred to the provision of walks and/or talks, arranged by committee members, reserves staff and directors. Trust personnel sometimes set up walks in conjunction with talks, referring to them as 'walks and talks' activities. Sometimes, walks and talks existed as separate activities but both were often run by local groups. It was found that most Trusts had sub-groups called 'local groups' who organise their own meetings and programmes of events, under the guidance of their own chairs and committees. Members of 1 Trust local group were described as:

> Very enthusiastic naturalists who know a lot and bring in more experts...local groups do the programmes of walks and talks and hedgehog groups. It's not a huge success - they're all old people.

Positive response about walks and/or talks came from 4 trusts. 1 Trust had taken bookings for talks up to a year in advance; another described the 'sellable' concept of 'Walks on the Wild Side' for groups and families to discover their own neighbourhoods. Walks and talks were praised by 1 education officer who had created a team especially for delivery of walks, talks and open days on reserves. She described the team's work as:

> ...about outreach to adults. Traditionally they were for members and it was about opening reserves to members. I've changed to include any green space, not just reserves. So it's broader now, with fewer events but larger numbers. I'm working to get non-members. I've asked for feedback on this, expecting traditional members uprising but - no problems! The marketing team has applauded it.

The fourth acclaimed example was a sponsored walk named 'Over the Hill'. The event was held on a hillside edge of a city, with quizzes and other activities over the day.

For the majority of Trusts responding in this category, walks and talks were described in an unfavourable light. An education officer considered the fact that even though she was responsible for guided walks and talks, there were:

> ...real problems in getting non-members to do these things. Guided walks are concepts not perceived as interesting by many people.

1 director suggested that walks and talks were based around nature reserves and a 'converted' audience, already interested in wildlife. Another director questioned, during interview, whether talks for 6 to 10 people 'made a difference'. The following two opinions, the first from a director, the second from an education manager point to the problems of both the current walks and talks and taking a new approach:

> Guided walks – there's a different leader for each one. Some could turn you off wildlife forever.

> At their worst, they are just a point and name process.... there are creative ways, but getting them done? Local groups just don't see this.

6.2.2.2 Adult education – courses, qualifications and training

Interview responses labelled as adult education courses, qualifications and training illustrated a varied programme of activities. Responses were usually more optimistic than those towards walks and talks. A number of Trust staff reported that they wished to *develop* courses and training offered to adults; responses frequently referred to hopes and plans rather than existing practice. 8 out of the 26 responses alluded to internal training, ranging from practical conservation to training in issues of health and safety. 2 Trusts wanted training specifically for wardens, another Trust wanted training for staff in general. This Trust was keen to write 'business plans' for each staff member to identify training needs. 5 Trusts referred to internal training specifically for volunteers. 1 member of staff from this group of Trusts suggested

that offering opportunities for volunteers to gain National Vocational Qualifications[10] (NVQs) would be favourable:

> .... they want something at the end - to be given accreditation.

Another 3 responses from individual Trusts highlighted the opportunities they already provide for qualifications: NVQs in Landscape and Ecosystems, Countryside Management, and the City and Guilds qualification for volunteers, respectively.

Adult education programmes for 4 Trusts involved learning about specific species, either on training days or longer courses. 3 Trusts described education programmes for the provision of skills associated with wildlife appreciation, for example wildlife photography, wood skills and other arts. The remaining 8 Trusts reported non-specified courses sometimes described as evening classes with the Workers Education Association (WEA), night schools or workshops; 1 course was run for members only. Many of these courses were considered to be popular, but 2 comments from different Trusts indicated that this work appealed to existing wildlife enthusiasts, particularly existing members and volunteers rather than a broader audience of 'other adults' in this overall category. 1 education manager explained that the training courses were not about 'outreach'; a director gave a similar opinion on the adult courses provided by his Trust:

> [Adult courses]...are OK – they are aimed to produce naturalists. In terms of their scope, they are successful.

6.2.2.3 Magazines and newsletters

Use of magazines and newsletters was reported in vey little detail by 13 Trusts. The researcher found that all Trusts produced magazines for members yet only 5 Trusts reported magazines or newsletters as part of their educational work. Two education officers spoke of the educational purposes of their Trust newsletters in terms of inter-Trust communication and as tools to gain or maintain membership:

> Our central admin.' does this - also the education and internal newsletter for volunteers: 250 people. Our newsletter goes to local groups as a networking newsletter. We help them to understand what's going on.

> The newsletter is a useful educational tool for 2400 members. But it's not thought of as education. It may reach people who are informed or enthused by it, but it's to retain membership.

6.2.2.4 Observation and recording programmes

The observation and recording programmes made available to adults were mentioned by 9 different Trusts. These programmes were sometimes created to involve new adults and were sometimes for existing members. They can be summarised in the following list of activities together with information about the target audiences where they were specified:

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[10] NVQs are National Vocational Qualifications, work related qualifications introduced by the UK Qualifications and Curriculutm Authority (QCA) in October 1997 http://www.dfes.gov.uk/nvq/what.shtml#WHO Retrieved from the World Wide Web July 2002.

- Surveys of ancient trees and recording stag beetle number, for local residents
- Identification and recording, for the 'general public'
- Recording bird numbers in partnership with the British Trust for Ornithology, for members
- Frogs wildlife garden survey, for local people
- Biological monitoring and report to the Trust, for a network of recorders
- A butterfly conservation day, for recruitment of local butterfly monitors.
- Trust liaison with a local historical/environmental group combining creation of a parish map and a biological survey.
- Local ladybird surveys in partnership with other specialised ladybird research groups.
- Training for members and non-members to carry out otter and butterfly surveys.

Little opinion was given about these survey and recording programmes, but 1 Trust education manager reported plans for the wildlife gardens survey, via:

> .... getting people to participate, who wouldn't normally.

6.2.2.5 Members' or volunteers' events

Events for members included a 'fungi day school', given by an 'expert' member within 1 Trust. 2 Trusts' organised days for corporate members, and 2 Trusts simply reported 'events for members' among a list of education activities offered.

6.2.2.6 Placement schemes

2 Trusts described adults involved in placement schemes as 'those on work experience'. In the 3 remaining Trusts responding in this category, the adults on placement schemes were reported to have worked within the government employment scheme called New Deal[11]. No strong opinions were stated concerning these posts. They were simply mentioned as educational experiences offered to adults. Only 2 of the New Deal affiliated Trusts described the roles of the workers; 1 was involved in surveying and another helped out on reserves.

6.2.3 Wildlife Watch work

Watch activities were the most frequently reported single activity across all categories. Information about Watch activities came from two sources. Firstly, combined responses from Questions 10 and 13 are presented in section 6.2.3.1, titled 'Watch as educational activity'. This subsection begins with Figure 13 on page 159 displaying a summary of response categories. Secondly, in 6.2.3.2 there follow responses from interview Question 12, which asked specifically about the future of Watch.

[11] Further information about New Deal employment scheme for people aged 18-24, 25+ and 50+ can be found at the website: http://www.newdeal.gov.uk/ Retrieved from the World Wide Web July 2002

6.2.3.1 Watch as educational activity

Figure 13 Activities within the 'Wildlife Watch' category

Wildlife Watch Work	Number of Trust Responses
Watch activities	37
Watch leader training	11
Other children's clubs	6
Watch events	1

6.2.3.1.1 Wildlife Watch activities

Watch activities reported in response to questions 10 and 13 were not usually fully described but were simply referred to as 'Watch' and these were grouped in the category of 'Watch activities', mentioned by 37 Trusts. Some interviews gave further details on the running of Watch within their Trusts, or they highlighted more individual or unique practices, as the following comments illustrate:

> Watch groups run once a month. There are 5 active groups. We've tried to revitalise...we have had a TV personality. (Comment from a Trust with 985 Watch members).

> We are working with 2 Sussex Scout groups doing their Conservation badges.....Mayfield Historical Society/ Environmental Group, that's another one. There's something for everyone, and Wildflower day - all under the Watch guise. (Comment from a Trust with 1125 Watch members).

> There are 4 active Watch groups. The volunteer Watch coordinator is very keen to expand it. But there will be no more than 6 groups. There is a suggestion that Watch groups follow our aims. There's no point in them being social groups only. (Comment from a Trust with 72 Watch members).

Comments on Watch activities often demonstrated absence of continuity in the running and management of Watch work across the Trusts. Trust personnel's responses regarding Watch membership figures suggested that Trusts with high Watch membership do not necessarily require or produce a high number of Watch groups. There was, however, some consistency of opinion about Watch regarding the necessity for development or expansion of Watch in some way. Views on development of Watch are discussed further in subsection 6.2.3.2.

Watch was often referred to as an educational activity in which children in the local county subscribe to National Membership and receive packs from National Office. However it was reported that Watch clubs can be carried out without any involvement of local Trusts. 1 education officer stated that this was the case in his Trust where a local group of children use Watch materials provided by National Office. The group was reported to have no communication with the local Trust whatsoever:

> It has dealings with National Office but not us. It's not satisfactory.

From the 37 Trusts which reported Watch as part of education work, 6 made specific reference to its use within schools. Only 1 of these Trusts reported negative opinions

about such a link. 1 education officer spoke of the Watch Education Service[12], (W.E.S.), which her Trust used to offer to schools:

> The W.E.S. doesn't work. We've lost 3 Watch groups.

This particular Trust was found to have lost 33% of Watch members between 20/08/98 and 06/05/99. However the education officer suggested that schools could be a successful place for Watch work to take place under a scheme other than the W.E.S:

> We surveyed schools a while ago and 60% wanted to run nature clubs.

Other Trusts that reported Watch work in schools stated a variety of ways in which it was run or could be run. There follows a list of 5 reported instances of Watch work existing or planned within schools:

- Watch clubs directly affiliated to schools
- Trust activities with 5 local schools – run by Watch volunteers
- Plans for Watch as an after school club
- Use of a Local Authority schools bulletin to publicise Watch
- Integrating Watch work with other non-Watch education carried out in schools

6.2.3.1.2 Watch leader training

Watch leader training was mentioned by 11 Trusts in total. 4 Trusts reported the training as part of general training offered for staff and volunteers. 1 Trust included Watch leaders in an NVQ programme for Wardens and Park Rangers. The education officer in this Trust felt that such a joint training opportunity was a positive form of partnership amongst different people within the Trust. She was supportive of:

> ...working in partnership with people – there's so much going on so I feel partnership's the way to go.

A large urban Trust offered Watch leader training to other organisations including Ranger Services and Local Authorities, who also helped to fund the training. A director of another Trust reported securing funding from National Office and ESSO oil company in order to run a 2-day training event for Watch leaders and others.

Responses demonstrated difference of opinion regarding the need for training. This difference appeared to have some connection with Trusts' numbers of Watch members. 1 Trust, with 16 groups and corporate sponsorship for the running of Watch, commented that Watch is 'quite sponsorable'. Responses from the Trust with the largest Watch membership (1381 reported in January 1999) supported this view. However, 1 education officer in a Trust with only 4 members simply thought that Watch did not require input of training and resources:

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[12] W.E.S. is a package of environmental information and activities designed by National Office, for teachers to use schools in schools http://www.sussexwt.org.uk/asp/content%20asps/edu_watchES.html Retrieved from the World Wide Web July 2002

> We do training days for Watch leaders, but it's not formal. There's no call for it here.

For some Trusts there was an issue not of training leaders, but of finding them in the first place. This opinion was echoed throughout responses to Question 22 (see section 6.2.3.2). The main obstacles experienced by Trusts when finding Watch leaders were reported to be the security checks and requirements for voluntary leaders to bear great responsibility for children's welfare and safety. Training for Watch leaders in areas of First Aid/ Health and Safety was mentioned by 3 Trusts, and was thought problematic as this comment from 1 Trust illustrates:

> Watch is run through a 1 day a week post employed by the Trust - it's not adequate for 12 active groups and over 40 volunteers and leaders help to do the Health and Safety admin. There's not enough time.

Problems with Watch Training were fewer for 1 Trust which had secured the highest Watch membership, successfully dispersed over a large rural and often inaccessible region. This Trust reported that its Watch leader recruitment was made easier by Scottish laws that required no police checks for Watch leaders.

6.2.3.1.3 Other children's clubs

Other non-Watch clubs for children, though not Watch work per se, have been included in the Watch category because they are closely linked with the club structure and age group associated with Watch. All 6 Trusts, responding in this category reported running these clubs alongside and not in place of Watch. 3 out of the 6 Trusts were found to have particularly low Watch memberships of 43, 26 and 11 respectively.

Responses to Questions 10 and 13 revealed little extra information about the non-Watch children's clubs. At other points during the interviews, it became clear that the 'Watch style' clubs were set up to enable Trusts to have local ownership and carry out local administration of children's Wildlife Trust membership. Trusts running these clubs expressed low levels of faith in the running of the national club, Wildlife Watch.

6.2.3.1.4 Watch events

Only 1 Trust specified Watch events as part of their programme of educational work. This Trust found that Watch events' success was limited because of factors of geography and marketing:

> ...they [events] are good but not publicised enough. There are so many events in the city.

6.2.3.2 The future of Watch

Given the high frequency of Trusts revealing Watch activities as part of their education work, and the importance of Watch for many individuals and Trusts, it seems helpful to discuss the following interview question here:

Question 22 What do you think should be the future of Watch? Why? Should it continue? Who should run it?

Comments in response to these particular questions about Watch did not produce consensus of opinion across Trusts or even among staff within a Trust. Answers to Question 22 were categorised, summarised and are tabled in Figure 14 along with the number of Trust responses and examples of typical responses within each category:

Figure 14 Wildlife Trusts' views on the future of Wildlife Watch

CATEGORY OF RESPONSE REGARDING WATCH FUTURE	NUMBER OF TRUST RESPONSES	EXAMPLES OF EVIDENCE TAKEN FROM RESPONSES TO INTERVIEW QUESTION 22.
Membership of Watch and/or Watch administration should be local	22	I'd argue for local administration very strongly. Otherwise there's no incentive. I believe admin. does relate to it. It's the whole identity thing. We do it for adult membership. Why shouldn't we for Watch? (DIRECTOR)
Watch should continue as it is or develop and expand	20	Keep going.....there's so much good work coming out. But change the funding structure. We run at such a loss. Out of £6.50 only £1.20 comes back to us, it's ridulous. (AWARENESS OFFICER)
Image is a problem or it needs changing	15	The relationship between Watch and schools needs to be looked at, as well as the integration of Watch into the Conservation plan. Watch is still perceived as Watch, not The Wildlife Trusts (EDUCATION MANAGER).
Watch is under-resourced	15	It, (Watch), falls down when it relies on volunteers - the funding side, they (National Office), expect Trusts to support it.....the most successful Watch group has the leader phoning all the parents to see if they are coming along at the weekend. (EDUCATION OFFICER)
Watch members should be the 'Junior Wing' of the Trusts/Junior membership of The Wildlife Trusts is important.	14	One of Watch's strengths is that it's part of a lifetime learning process. (We don't sell it sufficiently as a junior part of The Wildlife Trusts). Then you graduate to The Wildlife Trusts, with YOC this is the case. (DIRECTOR).
Watch materials/methods are praised	13	The project material and literature are good. That's a national role. It's important in being part of a national organisation. (EDUCATION OFFICER); The methodology of Watch is excellent. (EDUCATION MANAGER).
Tension between Watch as membership and Watch as club where some children attend without being members, either nationally or locally.	12	Vast numbers in Watch groups are not national members. It's a shame they miss out. Perhaps we should sell them the membership. (DEVELOPMENT OFFICER)
National Office is praised for its work on Watch	10	Continue with the national function and national themes- they are good at publicity and P.R. (DIRECTOR); It, [National Office], continues to do good things. (WATCH OFFICER)
Membership of Watch and/or Watch admin. should be national.	9	National Office could run *all* the membership, then Watch children would truly be members of The Wildlife Trusts. It seems crazy - individuals all doing the same work.. (DIRECTOR).
Watch is or should be carried out in partnership with other organisations	9	Some say Watch is elitist. I don't agree. There is chance to get into broader youth education though. We could, with groups, piggy-back structures already set up. (DIRECTOR).

CATEGORY OF RESPONSE REGARDING WATCH FUTURE	NUMBER OF TRUST RESPONSES	EXAMPLES OF EVIDENCE TAKEN FROM RESPONSES TO INTERVIEW QUESTION 22.
Watch is or should be carried out in schools.	9	Schools and Watch groups go very well together. Enthusiastic teachers will get Watch groups going...children are already there in clubs. (WATCH OFFICER).
The Watch Review was criticised.	8	The Watch Review was a shambles. We had to dig for the answers. (EDUCATION MANAGER); I initiated a sort of survey, before the self-congratulatory review, which failed and resulted in your, (Commissioned Education Reviewers') appearance. (EDUCATION MANAGER)
National Office criticised for its work on Watch	4	National Office used to provide training but now only on request. Now it's up to the organisers, especially education officers, to do this.... but there's so much to do. National Office should facilitate regional and national get-togethers for staff and volunteers. (EDUCATION MANAGER).
Profile of Watch requires boosting.	4	Watch should go back to its roots. It was on Blue Peter and the Wide Awake Club...Watch should go back to facilitating young people to be involved in scientifically valid, exciting fun, easily defined projects. (EDUCATION MANAGER).
YOC is better than Watch	4	It's controversial but YOC is streets ahead of us. Should we swallow our pride and join forces? (AWARENESS OFFICER).
Watch is better than YOC	4	I'd like to see it, (Watch), more valued. We do it so much better than YOC. (EDUCATION MANAGER)
Watch should not be handled regionally	3	Watch has a very big role to play. There are not enough groups. We need volunteers to run them.....it would be very difficult to run Watch on a regional basis though. (EDUCATION MANAGER).
Watch could or should be abandoned as part of the Wildlife Trust's work	3	I See no future in Watch groups....there's a competition for people's time and children's interest and I am completely fed up with Watch just picking on *any* topic. There's no regard to what we are doing. (DIRECTOR)
Watch should not be or is not carried out in schools	2	Watch should be less academic and more fun - divorced from schools and far less precious. (DIRECTOR)
Watch could be handled regionally	1	Regional handling...perhaps that would make it easier. (EDUCATION MANAGER)

6.2.4 Publicity

Figure 15 Activities within the 'publicity' category

Publicity	Number of Trusts Responses
General publicity	30
Campaigning	22
Interpretation	6
Publications	3

From the entire list of educational activities, the fourth most commonly reported area of work, mentioned by 37 Trusts, was the use of publicity. The responses in this

category were identified as those above; many Trusts mentioned more than 1 type of publicity exercise, but most could be labelled as 'general publicity'.

6.2.4.1 General publicity

Responses under the label of 'general publicity' included efforts to use local radio, television, press and mechanisms for educating people via notice boards, leaflets, libraries and tourist information offices. Also among these general responses were 14 Trusts' references to use of web pages. 4 Trusts simply mentioned web pages; 5 Trusts stated that their web pages were new or in the process of being designed; 4 Trusts indicated that their web sites were poor or out of date and 1 Trust revealed the use of another organisation's web page for publicising itself.

There was only 1 incidence where publicity and promotional work was spoken of negatively. Within interview discussions between 1 Trust director and 1 education manager, the director described her Trust's public relations as weak and the education manager saw publicity as something outside his remit of educational work. The Director agreed and commented on plans to change the situation:

> Next year, two marketing staff are to be taken on to enable [the education manager] to develop new projects.

The other responses within the category of general publicity work were of 1 of 2 types. Firstly, there were those that endorsed publicity and education as one and the same. Most of these responses came from directors. 1 education manager did consider publicity and education to 'go hand in hand'. Another member of education personnel stated that he considered using the local media to be part of his job. The following comments came from directors:

> Raising awareness in what we do - P.R. work, the magazine, media, leaflets, radio, T.V....*that is* education.

> Everyone has a marketing role. All are doing P.R. and also fundraising. People are whole people and perform a multifaceted role.

There were 3 Trusts which defined the function of their Local groups as promotional, and 1 Trust reported volunteers getting involved with publicity, by taking responsibility for website maintenance.

The second type of response treated education and publicity as more separate. These responses referred to aspects of Trust publicity with educational strands. 1 Trust regarded its development of an educational CD Rom as part of its publicity work rather than its education work. Several Trusts stated using photographs and publicity sessions with MPs. The use of a large hardware and gardening outlet, by 1 Trust, was indicated as a way of publicising the benefits of local charcoal production. The following responses from individual Trusts reveal some details of their promotional work, using the more common means of media publicity:

> The radio 'What's On' guide is one of the most effective ways of reaching people across the country.

> The free columns in the Northern Echo four times a year is a good idea.

> We are putting in application to the Festival of the Countryside to promote to a wider audience, using tourist information centres, guest houses, hotels.

6.2.4.2 Campaigning

Campaigning was often reported as 'doing campaigns' or 'campaigning' but sometimes it was described as receiving local and national press coverage. Campaigning was mentioned by 22 Trusts. It was difficult to determine from interview responses whether campaigns were individual Trusts' campaigns or part of The Wildlife Trusts' national programme of campaigns. Only 3 out of 22 campaign references clearly referred to national campaigns: 1 for awareness of Wildlife Week, 1 concerning peat; the topic of the third was not stated. Trusts reported that there were benefits in running campaigns of their own choice, although at other times during interviews staff did express interest in following a programme decided by National Office. The following comments from 1 administration officer and 1 education officer, respectively, illustrate the interest in local Trust campaigns above national campaigns:

> Campaigns are few and far between.... ones that fit our needs and resources. Several years ago we had a Roads campaign for awareness. It's a matter of timing. If it happens to dovetail into ours...but some are irrelevant for us, e.g. rivers running dry.

> Red squirrels - that was quite good. Our local population understand. Local communities run them after we set them up. Often campaigns don't apply to us.

Most Trusts referred to either their own Trust campaign work or that set up by National Office, but 1 Trust specifically indicated working in partnership with other organisations. This Trust also described campaigns being run jointly by conservation and marketing personnel.

Trusts did not often state the purpose or outcome of their campaigns, but 1 education manager explained that a frogs campaign involved a press release and then the dissemination of frog information sheets. These were described as giving 'all the information that people would need about frogs without having to directly phone the Trust'. Public response to this frog campaign was reported to be 'quite good'. Another Trust's river campaign was described as 'successful' but unlike the frogs campaign, the public's direct contact with the Trust was encouraged:

> It involved demonstrating, a public enquiry and mail shots...sort of 'if you want to help us, phone us'. The quality of service we gave, especially in talking to people was good.

The most common campaign theme was that of peat bogs or peat free gardening, yet there was considerable variety in campaign themes and numbers across Trusts. The following list demonstrates the variety of campaign themes. Unless otherwise stated, each issue was referred to by 1 Trust only:

- Agriculture and national campaign issues
- Badgers

- Biodiversity Action Plan launch
- Bogs.
- Campaigning for people to write to their M.P.s (2 Trust)
- Campaigns to raise interest in Wildlife Watch
- Canals
- Development, e.g. the building of a fairway across heathland
- Frogs
- Limestone pavements
- Local woodland
- Mosses (2 Trusts)
- National Wildlife Week
- Organic farming
- Otters (4 Trusts)
- Paper pulp dumping
- Peat (4 Trusts)
- Recycling in towns
- Red squirrels
- Rivers and/or flood plains (2 Trusts)
- Roads (2 Trusts)
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) led by David Bellamy
- Summer appeals for bird or butterfly recording
- Water for wildlife, freshwater and coastal campaigns

6.2.4.3 Interpretation

Interpretation was placed in the publicity category, not for its clear role in publicising the work of The Wildlife Trusts but rather for its roles of publicising and educating about Trust wildlife habitats. Interpretation was usually listed amongst leaflets and other publicity material. Interpretation was described as the use of boards to interpret and give information about reserves and other wildlife areas.

All those who included interpretation within the list of education activities were education staff. 4 of the 6 Trust personnel stated that interpretation was entirely their own task, not shared with other personnel. Of the two exceptions, 1 Trust employed an externally funded person to create boards, education packs and leaflets on a consultancy basis. The other worked with people outside the Trust:

> Interpretation is due for huge efforts and expansion. We have worked on some individually and some in partnerships. One was on urban fringes with the RSPB. They have the resources and the teaching staff.

6.2.4.4 Publications

Of the 3 Trusts which reported use of publications for educational publicity purposes, 2 Trusts produced booklets for general public use in shops, bookshops and museums. 1 Trust published something more substantial. The education manager commented on it as a:

> ...a wildlife gardening book that sold twenty thousand copies - that has an educational role if it fills a niche. It's cheap and well produced and successful.

6.2.5 Schools activities

Figure 16 Activities for and in schools

Activities for and in schools	Number of Trust responses
Junior schools	25
Schools ground work	16
INSET for school teachers	11
Education packs	10
Secondary schools	7
Pre-school or early years	6
Work with special needs children	6
Holiday activity schemes	5
Fieldwork	4

6.2.5.1 Junior schools

The most frequently reported work in the schools category was that directed at junior, primary or middle schools. 13 out of 25 Trusts, involved in junior schools activities, worked solely with junior schools. The other 12 Trusts were also involved in other school activities listed in Figure 16.

Interviews revealed that The Wildlife Trusts worked with junior school children in a variety of ways and locations: in visitor centres; specially designed classroom; re-created wildlife habitats at centres; on reserves and in school grounds or classrooms. Some Trusts simply mentioned a 'schools programme'. Only 1 member of staff reported negative attitudes to her Trust's work with junior schools. She saw the work as unsuccessful because the Trust was unable to meet schools' desire for teaching to be free of charge. Other Trusts had more positive experiences running schools work and some reported interesting detail regarding the individuals and activities involved. The following example is in a clear programme of junior schools work overseen by a specific member of the Trust assigned to schools education:

> The education officer does 4 days a week overseeing the schools programme at Willsbridge [centre)]. For the summer and autumn programme we need support from volunteers. On a school day with 3 hours teaching there is B and 2 volunteers. We are open from Tuesday to Friday for schools, B has a force of 18 volunteers - they are trained at the start of each schools term - it is an important social time for them too.

9 other Trusts described how their schools work used Trust facilities - usually visitor or educational centres. 3 Trusts mentioned work with junior schools on Wildlife Trust reserves. This school work was described as successful, where children enjoyed themselves and teachers were keen to return for repeat programmes. An education officer from 1 Trust offering experiences at a Trust reserve, enthusiastically described what schools do:

> Schools come to use the facilities. About 3 or 4 years ago, we drew up a more 'professional' team but still volunteers, from students to teachers to conservationists – a hardcore of 4 or 5; they decide on topic areas relevant to field centres. 5 or 6 areas are researched and geared to the National Curriculum. Schools ask what's going on and we send them the booking forms...schools have a 1 or 2 hour session, walking around the reserve, highlighting all the aspects. Rooms are available and a

> classroom. We give teachers packs of reference material – it takes the hard work out for the teachers and they can take it back with them...it is spoon-feeding.

The educator at the same Trust reported working in partnership with the local council's education officer on a Trust woodland site. Partnerships were mentioned by 3 other Trusts working with junior schools.

1 Trust worked with schools on reserves in partnership with the local County Council. This work was unpopular as the education manager suggested that it wasn't his role to 'get drawn into schools projects'. Local education authorities assisted another Trust by asking local schools to become involved in Agenda 21 action. The Trust then coordinated the work and offered advice on opportunities for 'close up contact with wildlife'. Communication with BTCV was also thought beneficial to this Trust in raising the profile of its work. The third case of partnership was one of a funding nature. English Nature funded a 'specific schools person' who was able to assist in meeting the huge demand for schools work experienced by this Trust.

Interview responses revealed the issue of meeting the demands of the National Curriculum and meeting the requests of teachers to cover what is seen to be National Curriculum 'relevant work'. 5 members of staff from different Trusts referred to the presence of National Curriculum material in their junior schools programme. These and other staff reported their concerns regarding real or imagined pressures in offering Curriculum related work, as well as concerns that children should not miss out on the fun side of wildlife education:

> It's 99% ecology and a small amount of geography, mainly Key Stage 1 and 2. Schools give their guidelines and requests, so it's Curriculum orientated...it has to be Curriculum related, not just a day out.

> There are 3 habitats with activities - most are transferable from Key Stage 1 to 2. Much work is very sensory as well as linking in with what teachers want...it's changed now, schools cannot come and just have a jolly day, so we cover the science curriculum. Webs and keys are wanted, they want us to do their chunk of Life Processes. But we don't want to be just like school. The good comments we get are 'had a good day out - haven't done any work'.

> It's about enticing teachers here by saying 'you will fulfil...'. Four end habitats are recreated here in the gardens. The idea is to give them the opportunity to experience the habitat. It can be done in a day with work to take back to the classroom...we encourage them to come back to get to know how the ecosystem works through hands-on, fun, science activities, but they aren't going to come with just science work.

Curriculum subjects were also addressed by the very few Trusts (3) who carried out work in or near the schools themselves. Particular activities were mentioned such as pond dipping; classroom work based on trips to nearby seashores; invertebrates projects and management of school wildlife areas. The major activity carried out in schools was the work on school grounds.

6.2.5.2 School grounds work

School grounds work was mentioned by 16 Trusts. It included Trusts giving advice, creating and maintaining natural areas, 'greening' school grounds through recycling

programmes and empowering teachers and children to initiate and develop wildlife areas. These responses were mostly positive, though some Trusts indicated lack of resources. 1 Trust reported a definite impact from this type of work. Another urban Trust's education manager felt that his 'Natural Curriculum' project really helped schools to develop their grounds and empowered children to do something about their own environment.

A noticeable theme among responses was the cost of developing school grounds, usually requiring assistance from outside the Trust's own resources. It was reported that work on school grounds sometimes had to be discontinued, due to lack of money. A Trust with this problem had previously been able to fund an annual awards programme for the best school grounds. Another Trust had, in the past, received funding from English Nature grants, which were later supplemented by local businesses. Once funding ran out, the school grounds service was no longer heavily promoted and this caused further financial concern for the Trust personnel, who no longer felt they could charge a fee for the few school grounds that were developed.

Where school grounds work ran successfully, partnerships and mechanisms for change were in place. For 1 Trust, Landscape 2000[13] and the company National Power provided staffing for 1 day a week to be spent on this area of school work. Another education manager worked with a local authority advisor and made a small charge for advice given on school grounds. This member of staff also reported the benefits of school grounds work being visible to the Trust, schools and sponsors alike:

> We usually try for 2 or 3 large grants a year – you can *see* school grounds projects and a plaque shows the sponsors.

1 Trust helped the City Council with its existing school grounds work. Another Trust's education manager referred to INSET for teachers on school grounds. This worked well, but the education manager suggested the service could be improved through more of a partnership *within* the Trust:

> We haven't got a large skills base. It needs Conservation to join in.

6.2.5.3 INSET for school teachers

3 of the 11 Trusts offering In Service Training (INSET) for teachers in schools presented the training as a way for teachers to learn about wildlife and their school grounds. Most staff who reported INSET for teachers, gave little descriptive detail. The training or advice was described as: talks to playgroup teachers; whole staff days 'when teachers want to know how to use the outdoor classroom'; outreach to schools and teachers and curriculum support work.

Teachers' enjoyment of the training was reported by 3 Trusts, 2 of which indicated successful INSET through working with outside bodies. Firstly an education business partnership system funded by Lloyds Bank, enabled teachers to be paid to receive training from 1 Trust. The other partnership was between 1 Trust and an environmental education working-group and was organised by two adjacent councils.

[13] Information about the organisation can be found at the website:
http://www.landscape2000.com.au/ Retrieved from the World Wide Web September 2002

The group promoted networking of environmental bodies in the area and resourced training days for teachers.

One noticeable characteristic of all the Trusts providing teacher training is their geographical location. All 11 Trusts were in the south of England, except for 1 in Wales. All these Trusts were located in well-populated areas and 5 were in a southeast regional cluster of Trusts. This may indicate some sharing of ideas with regard to INSET or a greater 'pot' of funds available for such activities in the southeast. Other interview questions did reveal Trusts in this region to have a good communication network between them and to have a sense of regional binding.

6.2.5.4 Education packs

Analysis of responses to questions 10 and 13 showed that education packs were provided by 10 Trusts, which had no obvious similarities. It was unclear who, in each Trust, was responsible for the design of educational materials; only 1 Trust stated that someone was employed on a consultancy basis for interpretation, leaflets and writing of educational material.

Description of education materials often included explanation of their purpose. 3 Trusts mentioned the packs' purpose in meeting National Curriculum or teachers' needs. 3 Trusts suggested a benefit of educational packs was their ability to 'look professional', 'raise profile' or have 'an impact'. This last reference to the impact of educational material was made by a conservation manager, who commented on his own Trust's education packs:

> I'm peripheral to education staff but I am sure that the education packs, if they were distributed properly, could make more of an impact.

Another 3 Trusts made reference to use of education packs for: a particular urban site; for activities in outdoor education centres, and for teachers' use back at school.

6.2.5.5 Secondary schools

The 7 Trusts offering education activities for secondary schools were all found to do so in addition to work with junior school or younger children. 1 Marketing manager revealed that more work was carried out with secondary school children than with either primary or university students. 4 Trusts readily praised their own work with older children in formal education, as these interview extracts indicate:

> The sixth form work – very near their A levels, I did work on the local forest.... several students changed from social geography to the ecology side, which I influenced.

> The Green and Kicking National Curriculum project was where kids get together and they decide how their 'conference' is going to be presented – they produce a report. For Agenda 21, they've done water voles, Nike production, Fair Trade issues...hopefully it will link up with European events next year. It's very successful.... it's remembered afterwards – a case of real pride.

> GCSE students used to approach the old education officer. His help would have had real impact – a capacity he had as a secondary school teacher and environmentalist.

> We are probably the only educational centre providing for A' levels on the southeast. I have offered my skills to other Trusts but no one asks me to help.

It was in response to another interview question that 1 Trust education officer presented further information on his scheme for A' level revision.

6.2.5.6 Pre-school or early years

6 Trusts communicated activities within the category of pre-school or early years activities. 3 Trusts gave some details of these activities, other than a simple referral to children at Key stage 1. 1 set of activities was described as an out-of-school club. This play scheme was run in the form of ten two-hour sessions of environmental games, all funded with money from The New Opportunities Fund. A three-year project focussing on environmental play, called Earth Kids, was the vehicle for another Trust to reach early years children. Earth Kids, assisted by a publication, was designed to influence those who become involved in planning and creating play areas. The third example was a Teddy Bears Picnic day. The member of education staff, referred to as an environmental teacher within her Trust, conveyed its role in allowing children to:

> ...take their teddies to give them a shelter – they all had to find food and survive. It's just about being outdoors really.

6.2.5.7 Work with special needs children

A minority of Trusts reported providing opportunities for education of special needs groups. Only 1 of these 6 Trusts referred to provision of outdoor activity, but not for the children themselves. An education manager reported running a coppicing programme, involving making and selling wood products. The programme was linked to a school for children with learning difficulties, who were said to 'get involved'.

The other Trusts which spoke of work with special needs groups did so in a rather negative way, giving the impression that visible returns were considered the most important aspect of the work. An education manager at a different Trust discussed her attempts to develop a special needs programme within her Trust, but encountered problems:

> ...but I dare not mention it. There will be a lack of understanding as to its use to save wildlife. Most staff understand – committees are the problem.

6.2.5.8 Holiday activity schemes

Most of the 5 Trusts which reported running holiday schemes ran them as clubs or a series of weeks' wildlife events during school vacation time. Like the schemes for special needs education, the holiday schemes also faced problems. Although the education officer in 1 urban Trust was keen on the idea, the director was concerned with the lack of funds for such activities. 1 director did describe his Trust's holiday activities for 6 year olds as successful in that they were over-subscribed. In another case, where activities for schools were quite numerous and the Trust received large

numbers of school children every year, two members of full time staff regularly ran holiday events.

6.2.5.9 Fieldwork

Of the few examples of fieldwork, fieldwork holidays or residential field activities (from 4 Trusts), most were organised by Trusts with centres and accommodation available. However, as the interview excerpt below shows, residential facilities were not a necessary condition. Activities were offered for A' level students; another Trust offered 5-day visits for an unspecified age group and in a different Trust an 'Earth Education Programme' was run for children in school years 5 and 6 (aged 9-11 years). The earth education programme was described by the education manager:

> Families are dragged in too. Sometimes they camp – it's best if they do. We would have residential facilities if we could.

Only 1 Trust specified the subjects covered during its field trips to centres: outdoor science, geography, history, technology, art and craft. The lack of details for this area of work seemed to suggest the relatively infrequent organisation of fieldwork holidays and activities amongst the Trusts who mentioned fieldwork.

6.2.6 Use of centres

Figure 17 Use of centres for educational activities

Centres	Number of Trust Responses
Visitor centres	19
Demonstration gardens and habitats	7
Study centres	5
Garden centres	3

6.2.6.1 Visitor centres

The 26 Trusts reporting use of 'centres' as a basis for educational activities actually referred to quite different forms of centre-based work. The 19 responses that specifically referred to use of visitor centres were a mixture of negative, positive and descriptive comments about the centres' uses. 5 Trusts' staff and volunteers thought that their Trusts' visitor centres needed improvement or were lacking in some way. The following issues were reported by the 5 Trusts respectively:

- Displays could become more interactive, rather than just on boards.
- Publicity could be improved to attract more people to the Trust centre.
- The events programme for adults visiting the centre was seen to need improvement.
- Practical difficulties such as lack of toilet facilities discouraged the continuation of education within 1 visitor centre.

- Difficulties in dividing the income between education work in the centre and the centre as a business venture.

5 Trusts gave positive comments regarding the centres; 2 education officers interviewed at 1 Trust simply said that their visitor centre was good. Another Trust's education manager gave reasons why she thought her Trusts' 2 centres were 'excellent':

> ...because we take a limited number - there's a good ratio of leaders to visitors, not like Slimbridge, (though we don't make money), it's more personalised. Then there's Folly Farm, which is an old building. It's basic, children like that.

1 Trust education manager reported that his centre has a 'friendly face'. He also suggested that people remembered the centre for its successful campaign against badger diggers. 1 person who reported problems with his own centre, did praise the multi-media visitor centre at another Trust, where displays were reported to be so good that the Trust was asked to take on contracts to build exhibitions elsewhere.

Interview responses indicated differences among visitor centres in terms of their focus of activity or physical organisation. For example, whereas 1 Trust Director described his centres as a 'porta-cabin' and a farm, another education manager explained that her large urban Trust owned 4 centres and six staffed sites. Another Trust with a large number of centres (4 plus 1 other 'small one'), reported using the centres as a basis for events. Work with Guides, Brownies, RSPB and adult-education groups were activities reported to take place at 1 Trust's large and highly publicised coastal centre. 6 centres owned by another Trust were reported to have different roles. According to the marketing manager, 1 of these centres was described as 'a visitor experience' and another as a 'Watch centre'. The marketing manager pointed out that all of the 6 centres supply binoculars to visitors and the staffing at 1 of the centres was praised:

> ... he's a dedicated member of staff - he always chats about the reserves to people. He's quite an educationalist.

Education at a Welsh Trust was almost entirely based at 1 of the Wildlife Trust's most rural Welsh centres. The centre's warden also had the role of education officer, which he undertook as part of a marketing group's 'Learning in Magical Mid-Wales' scheme. The visitor centre was publicised as a part of an environmental educational experience in connection with the local and well-known Centre for Alternative Technology.

There were some Trusts that shared hopes to start or develop visitor centres. The staff described centre activities in terms of plans and improvements:

> We've talked for years about a visitor centre on a non-owned nature reserve. There are several options - there's one place with a very active wardening group. There are great hopes placed on the grants officer to get the money in.

> We need to encourage repeat visits to use the centre as a resource rather than annual visits.

Overall, in response to these interview questions there was no obvious single view presented about the use of visitor centres for educational purposes. Beyond questions 10 and 13, more opinions regarding centres were volunteered. Often those without centres saw potential benefits and those with centres were more aware of practical problems of centre management (see section 6.3.1.2.11 for further information on centres).)

6.2.6.2 Demonstration gardens and habitats

Demonstration gardens or wildlife sites and habitats were reported in 7 Trusts' responses. However, it was evident through the author's visits to Trusts that at least another 11 Trusts had this educational facility at their visitor centre sites or offices. Of the 7 who did make reference to such facilities, there was 1 example of a 'portable habitat'. Another Trust took portable pond displays to shows. 2 Trusts used gardens with demonstration habitats, created especially for educational purposes and school use from Key Stages 1 to 3. The remaining 3 examples were cases of wildlife gardens, though none of these was thought to be used to the full. 1 Trust reported to the need for a change in wildlife garden use. He suggested a new management of gardens involving more people. It would be:

> .... a different sort of job involving nature reserve staff and education.

There was 1 case of a garden described as a 'bone of contention' within a Trust. Contracts had been set up with an outside organisation – Groundwork – to create the small wildlife garden outside the Trust's urban offices. Local children had been involved in the design, but the funding situation later altered and the education manager took over, only to find the task unmanageable:

> I ended up planting and managing it. I haven't got time, though the reception lady here expressed interest.

The third Trust also showed signs of difficulty in organising use of its gardens, as this education manager's comment demonstrates:

> We have a well-managed garden in situ but without on-site interpretation. There is a budget for it but no one has grabbed it. Now I'm using a 5-year plan for the site – it would be great to use it as a schools and community reserve. It's also on a tourist route.

6.2.6.3 Study centres

Staff responses did not always distinguish study centres or education centres from visitor centres. Only 5 Trusts made the distinction, by referring to their centres differently. 4 of these simply used the names 'study centre' or 'education centre'. From the author's visits it could be seen that the buildings were classroom-orientated rather than appropriate for visitors to drop in and view displays or other information. Only 1 Trust's education manager made an explicit comment about the centre's 'educational' purpose rather than the centre's visitor activity:

> In the Trust I'm struggling with ladies who want this as a cafe. It was built as an education centre. It has Education/Visitor Centre on the signs and in the summer it is open to the public. This is its first season - funded by Celtic Energy.

In addition to the 5 study centres mentioned, the author's own visits found at least another 8 Trusts whose buildings or visitor centres could be termed study centres in that they were purpose-built classrooms or adapted classroom areas were incorporated in the buildings.

6.2.6.4 Garden centres

'Garden centres' activities have been included under the visitor centres label. This was decided appropriate due to the garden centres activities' predominant purpose in representing Trust work, permanently or semi-permanently. Additionally 1 garden centre was reported as a kind of mini visitor centre in another location. Only 3 Trusts in the south of England referred to this sort of activity.

1 Trust set up themed events including a Victorian Wildlife Day at a local garden centre. A wildlife garden owned by a garden centre, but managed by another of the Trusts, was considered to be poorly used by this education manager:

> There is little public awareness that it exists and there's little use of the site. There is an historical agreement between the garden centre manager and the volunteer running the site. Really it has been dealt with insensitively.

1 Trust planned to involved 5 garden centres in its campaign work, possibly within the remit of the Trust's community development programmes.

6.2.7 Further /Higher education

Figure 18 Activities within 'Further/Higher education' category

Further Education/ Higher Education	Number of Trust responses
College or university contacts/courses/qualifications	15
Student placements	5
Teacher training	4

6.2.7.1 Colleges and Universities

The engagement of Wildlife Trusts in education activities within or for Further Education or Higher Education, (hereafter referred to as FE or HE), is dominated by direct work with colleges or universities. 15 Trusts worked only in direct contact with colleges/universities *or* created placements for students *or* became involved in training students. Only 4 Trusts were exception to this rule combining work within more than 1 of the categories. For example 1 Trust, which described itself as a provider of qualifications for students, also offered work placements in its Trust. The qualifications provided by colleges or universities were offered in partnership with or through a centre of HE or FE, hence are classed as different from those in the 'members, volunteers and adults' category.

Most education provision fitting within the category of 'university or college contacts, courses or qualifications' was linked with universities, however 3 Trusts' staff spoke of providing teaching for A'level and NVQ at colleges or sixth forms. In

1 of these cases, an education manager expressed concern about the amount of time that was needed for dealing with students:

> We have difficulties handling student enquiries. We do attempt to respond positively, yet it could take a lot of staff time. Local students can come in...although it's a potential educational situation, we struggle.

Another Trust indicated work in progress in the form of a draft NVQ curriculum in environmental education for local FE and HE providers:

> There are plenty of countryside NVQs but we are looking at skills for environmental education - to train teachers, Watch leaders, reserve wardens and park rangers.

Finally, 1 urban Trust had links with universities – providing a Science Masters degree in environmental education - and with other teacher training institutions.

The activities reported by other Trusts, that did not feature provision of qualifications, included: taking students on walks in Trust reserves; giving talks/ evening classes at universities; using university facilities as a base for a marine event; Trust visits for students and several unspecified links with universities. Most comments displayed neither worry nor enthusiasm for this area of work, but 1 education manager mentioned setting up ten-week courses with a local university. She did not see the courses as a good use of the Trust's time, though it was not clear whether the problem was a case of lack of attendance, financial remuneration or other:

> ... we set up the courses, but other organisations are able to do that. We didn't seem to get great value. I will react to demand with that...only 2 of the 5 courses ran.

6.2.7.2 Student placements

Of the 5 Trusts which offered student placements, 1 Trust's education manager considered their placements as successful:

> It's very opportunistic – the 5 students put on an exhibition within 2 months of arriving!

1 Trust reported encouraging students to look for work experience within an environmental organisation. Another Trust's wildlife information service gave students placements that involved dealing with the many calls and enquiries that occur. A six-month placement on a nature reserve survey was provided by 1 Trust and a final Trust in this category simply mentioned student placements offered to the university students with whom the Trust worked.

6.2.7.3 Teacher training

Teacher training was listed amongst many educational activities by just 2 Trusts. In addition to educating teachers at a local university, the Trusts provided INSET for teachers. Another Trust trained PGCE students, who visited the Trust; the education manager explained the origins of this work:

> The university thought about getting an environmental slot on courses. A member of the Trust Council is already a lecturer – so it's a good link.

The remaining example within the category was reported as an environmental contribution to initial teacher training. It was carried out by 1 person with a specific remit to educate within higher education, including teaching for an Environmental Education MSc course.

6.2.8 Work with young people

The responses mentioning work with young people showed 11 Trusts' involvement in activities with young people, possibly school age, but outside the contexts of formal education or Wildlife Watch club. This category of work with young people is the smallest category among the 8 broad educational categories. At other points during interviews, opinions of concern were expressed regarding the Trusts' low levels of engagement with young people between school age and adulthood.

Figure 19 Educational activities for young people

Work with young people	Number of Trust Responses
'Uniform groups'	6
'Youth work'	5
'Children for Change'	3
Other empowerment work with young people	3

6.2.8.1 Uniform groups

The work labelled as 'uniform groups' was that carried out with Brownies, Cubs, Scouts, Guides and occasionally other existing groups of young people, for example The Woodcraft Folk. These young people took part in the following activities with Trusts: small-space community gardening; receiving newsletters; watching slideshows; gaining conservation badges; some were also invited to become involved with tree surveying and planting for a national 'Trees of Time and Place'[14] project. 1 education officer highlighted the reactive nature of work with such young people, who have to go to the Trust, instead of being approached by Trust. Another Watch officer gave a similar comment:

> For Brownies, we do slide shows, activities...it's not advertised. We haven't the personnel.

6.2.8.2 Youth work

5 Trusts reported a selection of opportunities for young people, usually described by Trusts as 'youth work'. A director from 1 of these Trusts, labelled his Trust's youth work as 'rather poor' even though he reported a small and potentially successful project in progress:

[14] A national tree-planting campaign supported by UK MPs and sponsored by Esso; further information is available from the website: http://www.totap.org.uk/ Retrieved from the World Wide Web August 2002.

> It's a difficult age and we don't have the expertise. We are working with 2 youth workers and about 8 sixteen year old boys – transforming the grounds at a youth centre.

Other Trusts were more complimentary towards their youth schemes, though the reactive nature of this work is evident in the first of these comments:

> We have a young volunteer scheme.... conservation work on reserves. Some are Duke of Edinburgh. It's for those between school and adults and it's *useful* work for young people between 14 and 18. Most of them find us.

> The Summer Youth Challenge is a week-long event at a nature reserve for children at Welshpool. We have 10 to 15 a day for a week. They get involved in reserve management. It's successful.

It is not clear whether the second of these quotes refers to a holiday scheme for school children, but as its 'youth' focus caused it to be placed in this category. The examples of youth work given by the 3 remaining Trusts included reports of:

- A youth club's requests for participation in 1 Trust's work,
- Youth work described as 'so important' by 1 conservation manager, even though it was acknowledged not to be very lucrative.
- Youth work, as part of a local council and English Nature jointly funded community project. Guided walks and small-scale wildlife gardening were available only if requested by youth groups.

6.2.8.3 Children for change

Analysis of interview responses also revealed the existence of youth work in the form of a National Office devised scheme called 'Children for Change'. Although National Office sources suggested that many Trusts took part in the Children for Change scheme, only 3 Trusts reported it as part of their educational work. Even then, 1 Trust simply made a brief reference to a member of staff from National Office who had been seconded to his Trust to run the Children for Change scheme. Interview responses demonstrated that staffing and running of the scheme was dominated by National Office. The scheme was described by 1 Watch officer as an opportunity for children to 'take their own agenda'. She commended its work, though acknowledged it as something outside the Trust's work:

> The group is for children aged 9 to 13. It appears to have evolved out of Watch, the Children for Change kids are ex. Watch members. Cumbria Wildlife Trust is not specifically involved but those kinds of groups are open to most influence and can have influence in the community.

An education manager from a third Trust expressed Children for Change work as an 'ideal hook' for young people's involvement in other youth work which has been termed 'other empowerment work with young people'.

6.2.8.4 Other empowerment work with young people

The Trust that linked empowerment work with Children for Change was 1 of 3 Trusts which reported provision of educational opportunities of this sort. An urban Trust gave another example of empowerment work for young people - specifically a 'young persons conference' for sixty 16 to 18 year olds. It was run on the subject of water and linked to Local Agenda 21 activities (Local Agenda 21 is referred to in Chapter 3 page 40). This conference was also connected to another Trust's empowerment-focussed youth work, where young people were encouraged to think about creating sustainable communities.

This same Trust reported running a youth group initiative called 'Envirochange' run in partnership with BTCV, though no further details were added. The third Trusts cited environmental art as an out-of-school project for young people to use art and technology to demonstrate to others the value of wind and solar power.

6.3 Strengths and weaknesses of The Wildlife Trusts' education provision

The following section is divided into two parts. 6.3.1 addresses strengths then 6.3.2 addresses weaknesses of the Trusts' education provision.

6.3.1 Strengths

The strengths in The Wildlife Trusts' provision of educational activities were revealed in three ways, firstly through analysis of the responses from two topics of interview questions. The first topic was that of **best practice**, addressed in section 6.3.1.1. The questions asked were:

Question 5. What do you think is the best practice of The Wildlife Trusts in general?

Question 6. What do you do best here, (in this Trust)?

The second topic was Trust personnel's perception of **significant impac**t of The Wildlife Trusts' work with people. This was investigated through asking the interview question below; the responses are discussed in section 6.3.1.2.

Question 10. What do you do that has real or significant impact?

Thirdly in section 6.3.1.3, **outside views** of The Wildlife Trusts' strengths are presented. Outside views were revealed through analysis of 3 questionnaire questions presented to visitors and the independent sample. These questions were:

Question 5. What do you consider to be the best aspects of your present visit here? (asked of visitors)

Question 8. If you have visited other Wildlife Trust sites please tell us which place you have enjoyed visiting the most and why? (asked of visitors)

Question 6. Which site have you most enjoyed visiting and why? (asked of independent sample)

Each set of analysed responses are split into subsections and dealt with in the order in which they appear above.

6.3.1.1 Best practice

Figures 20 and 21 (pages 181 and 182 respectively) provide a comprehensive view of all the comments of 'best practice' for either the Wildlife Trust partnership as a whole (columns 2, 3, 4) or individual Trusts (columns 5, 6, 7) or both (columns 9 and 11). The responses tabled in the figures are derived from opinions given in answer to Question 5 and 6 by a total of 131 people in 3 groups amongst the Wildlife Trust personnel:

- 85 'educational staff' including those with titles of education manager, education officer, awareness officer, community staff, centre and site officers who represented Trusts' educational work in the interview sessions.
- 32 'directors' including those named directors, assistant directors, chief executives, Trust managers and directors of operations.
- 14 'others' including conservation staff, marketing staff, programme managers, volunteers and trustees.

Responses to interview questions 5 and 6 are tabulated in Figures 21 and 21 and are organised in rank order of perceived importance, according to Trust personnel:

Figure 20 Examples of best practice reported by 5 or more Trusts

	Partnership			Individual Trusts				
	Education staff	Directors	Others	Education staff	Directors	Others	Total number of responses *	Total number of Trusts**
Reserve management	4	9	4	3	4	2	26	20
Work/making contact with local communities	6	1	0	6	3	0	16	12
Watch clubs and materials	6	3	2	3	1	1	16	11
Reserves quality	3	5	2	3	2	0	15	11
Partnerships	3	0	0	7	0	0	11	11
LA relationships	4	1	0	4	6	0	15	10
Habitat conservation for future	5	4	0	2	2	1	13	9
Fundraising	0	3	1	2	3	1	10	9
Influencing decision makers	4	1	1	2	2	0	10	9
General media use and publicity	1	2	0	2	3	1	9	9
Engaging local interest	7	3	2	4	3	1	20	8
Creating local action	5	5	0	2	0	0	12	8
Reserve acquisition	3	2	2	2	2	0	11	8
Use of local knowledge	4	1	1	2	1	0	10	8
People work incl. adults	0	2	2	3	3	0	8	8
Habitat/species programmes	4	1	0	7	2	1	15	7
Urban projects	2	1	0	1	2	1	7	7
Nothing/don't know	2	1	1	0	3	0	8	6
Visitor centres	1	2	1	1	1	1	7	6
Programmes of educational activities offered	1	1	0	5	0	0	7	6
Dialogue with farmers/landowners	2	0	0	2	2	0	6	6
Schools work	1	0	0	5	0	0	6	6
Credibility/good reputation	1	2	1	2	2	1	8	5
Events	0	0	0	4	2	0	6	5
Volunteer involvement / good volunteer relationships	0	2	0	1	3	0	6	5
Use of scientific/non emotional approach	2	2	1	0	0	0	5	5

*Total number of people giving this responses = sum of columns 2–7
**Total number of Trusts offering this response in either or both categories (Partnership and Individual Trust)

Figure 21 All remaining examples of best practice

	Partnership			Individual Trust				
	Education staff	Directors	Others	Education staff	Directors	Others	Total number of responses *	Total number of Trusts**
Value of volunteers for trust work	1	3	0	2	1	2	9	4
Working with young people + secondary school work	0	0	0	5	1	0	6	4
Advocacy/empowerment	2	0	0	0	2	0	5	4
Conservation at a *local* level	3	0	0	1	0	0	5	4
Campaigning/lobbying	2	1	0	1	1	0	4	4
Wide audience reached	1	0	0	1	2	0	4	4
Education/Study centres	0	1	1	1	1	0	4	4
Providing first hand experiences for people	2	0	0	2	0	0	4	4
Monitoring	0	1	0	1	2	0	4	3
Teamwork & links between conservation & education	1	0	0	0	2	0	3	3
Qualified staff	2	0	0	1	0	0	3	3
Volunteers doing education work	1	0	0	2	0	0	3	3
Surviving with personnel/financial difficulties	0	0	0	2	0	1	3	3
Working with industries/businesses	0	0	0	3	0	0	3	3
Return of people	1	0	0	2	0	0	3	3
Working with specific groups	0	0	0	2	1	0	3	3
Meeting schools' needs	0	0	0	3	0	0	3	3
Environmental art	1	0	0	3	0	1	5	2
Internal training	0	0	0	0	2	0	4	2
Working as part of WT partnership	1	2	0	0	0	0	3	2
Enthusiasm of education staff	1	0	0	2	0	0	3	2
Diplomacy	0	0	0	3	0	0	3	2
School grounds work	0	0	0	3	0	0	3	2
Use of specific site or location	0	0	0	2	0	0	2	2
Development/business plans	0	0	0	2	0	0	2	2
Working as an NGO	2	0	1	0	0	0	2	2
Explaining reasons behind work	0	0	1	0	1	0	2	2
Newsletter/magazines/published material	1	0	0	1	0	0	2	2
Working within a niche	0	1	0	2	0	0	2	2
INSET for teachers and HE work	0	0	0	2	0	0	2	2
Recording programmes	11	0	0	0	0	0	2	2
Staff out posted to sites	1	0	0	0	1	2	2	2
Being financially viable and developing	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	2
Conservation planning	1	2	0	1	0	0	2	2
Having a membership	0	0	1	0	0	1	2	1
Face to face work	1	0	0	1	0	0	2	1
Reserve interpretation	1	0	0	1	0	0	2	1
Education on reserves	1	0	0	1	0	0	2	1
Play schemes	0	0	0	2	0	0	2	1
Family days	0	0	0	2	0	0	2	1
Breadth of activities offered	0	0	1	0	0	1	2	1
Reserve access	0	0	0	1	1	0	2	1
Attitudes to education staff	0	0	1	0	1	0	2	1
Work on local BAPs	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1
Working as a region	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
'Bottom up' work	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1
Director General's work	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Director of Education's work	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1
Organisation of committees/working groups	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1
Support from trustees	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1
Education staff supporting conservation aims and work	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1
Air of competence	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	1
Friendly/approachable	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Wildlife gardens and demonstration habitats	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Wildlife holidays/ holiday activities	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1

*Total number of people giving this responses = sum of columns 2-7
**Total number of Trusts offering this response in either or both categories (Partnership and Individual Trust)

As the figures illustrate, the range of responses referring to best practice was quite immense (430 individual responses in total). This can be partly explained by the fact that many individual respondents and Trusts gave more than 1 response. There were frequent cases where many individuals in 1 Trust gave the same responses. However, the data were handled and displayed in Figures 20 and 21 (pages 181 and 182) such that any number of positive responses given by Trust personnel was counted as a single Trust-response, whether 1 person or 5 people responded within 1 category. This mode of data representation is explained further in 5.5.1 of the Methodology chapter.

It should be noted that even though reserve management is by far the most frequently referenced best practice, this response was only mentioned by 23% of personnel who responded (26 people from a total of 113). Similarly, reserve management was cited by less than half the Trusts, that is to say only 20 from 46 Trusts and 1 UK National Office.

Reserve management, along with some of the other more frequently perceived Trust strengths, (such as reserve quality and habitat conservation for the future), is not a specifically education-focussed example of best practice. This should be understood in the light of the following issue: The interview questions 5 and 6 did not specifically ask for *education-based* best practice. Some Wildlife Trust personnel assumed that responses referring to general best practice were requested, others made an educational link. If asked, the interviewer indicated that best practices within the partnership or individual Trusts could include work in any field. The slight ambiguity of the question did, as might be expected, draw out different answers from personnel with different interest or roles. The fact that the data collected from the Education Review revealed conservation-focussed best practices is a valuable finding. Important attitudes towards education, possible gaps in educational practice and future possibilities for educational work were revealed. These points are discussed in the thesis' final chapter.

Next, the entire list of best practices, visible in Figures 20 and 21 (pages 181 and 182) will be discussed in terms of:

6.3.1.1.1 **Categorisation of best practice** - how the best practices are grouped or categorised

6.3.1.1.2 **Best practice for partnerships and/or individual Trusts** – whether there are some best practices that pertain to the Wildlife Trust partnership as a whole and some which relate only to individual Trusts

6.3.1.1.3 **Differences between responses, according to the role of respondent**

6.3.1.1.4 **Respondent role and partnership/individual Trust best practice** – identifiable patterns between respondent-role and views on best practice as either a partnership or an individual Trust strength.

6.3.1.1.5 **Details of top 5 best practices** – factual and anecdotal evidence for the overall top 5 best practices (reserve management, work or contact with local communities, Wildlife Watch clubs and materials, reserve quality and partnerships).

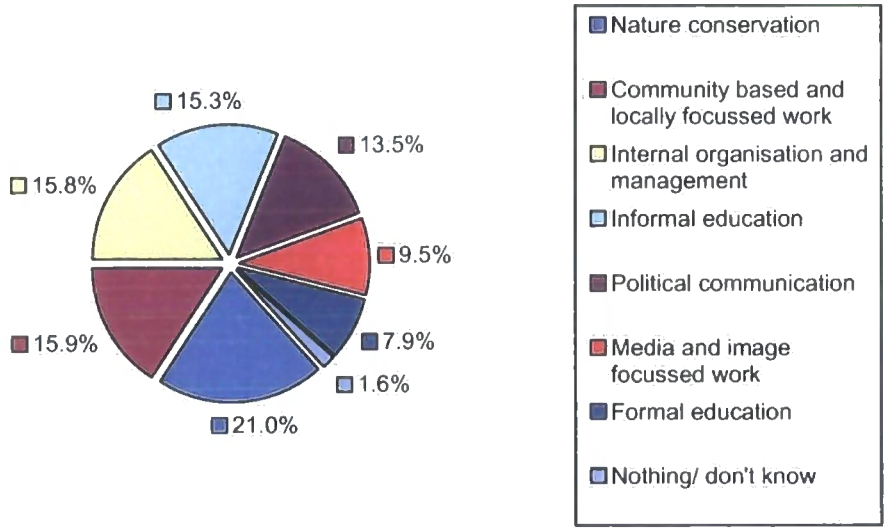
6.3.1.1.1 Categorisation of best practice

The entire collection of best practices has been tabulated in Figures 20 and 21 on pages 181 and 182 respectively. The collection of best practices was analysed to reveal 8 categories of response listed below:

1. Nature conservation
2. Community based and locally focussed work
3. Internal organisation and management
4. Informal education
5. Political education
6. Media and image focussed work
7. Formal education
8. 'Nothing' or 'don't know'

Figure 22 which follows, summarises the percentage of responses for each of the 8 best practice categories.

Figure 22 Percentage of responses within each category of best practice



Clearly, the single most frequently reported category of best practice is that of nature conservation. However, a closer look at the set of 8 categories of best practice revealed that much of the 'best' work reported by Trusts is of a communicational and educational nature. In fact, 5 of the categories fit easily within one broader classification of **communication and education**. Communication and education account for 62% of all the best practice responses within the following 5 smaller categories of best practice: (i) community and locally focussed work; (ii) informal education; (iii) political communication; (iv) media and image focussed work and (v) formal education. Only 'nature conservation', 'internal organisation and management' and 'nothing/don't know' are outside the broad classification of communication and education.

To illustrate which individual best practices fall into each category, a list is provided in Figure 23 on page 186. Some of the best practices fall easily into categories and some categories are self-explanatory; others require some further explanation. For example, the best practice described as 'conservation at a *local* level' has been considered to lie outside the category of 'nature conservation'. Instead, it fits better within the category of 'community based and locally focussed work' because of the emphasis on 'localness' as these directors illustrated:

> The local delivery of nature conservation...large numbers of people are mobilised. We are joining in with Agenda 21 and are working by having an effect locally, perhaps more than nationally.

> Management of reserves locally...we do it with *local* and community involvement

Similarly, the response 'reserves access' was classified as strength of education work, rather than as a strength in conserving nature. As these education officers' comments suggest, reserves access is considered to benefit people:

> We operate an open reserve policy, which is always nice to say – it's a good ethic.

> Our marine conservation areas are not like reserves. They have no fences. Wardens can limit where kids go, yet enhance their experiences.

The single response 'wildlife gardens and demonstration habitats' could be considered to be a showcase of nature conservation on a small scale. However during interview, wildlife gardens and demonstration habitats were described as successful settings for 2-hour workshops for schools within an urban an industrial area, hence this responses was counted as formal education. Figure 23 now follows, illustrating all best practice responses and their corresponding categories.

Figure 23 List of best practices and corresponding categories

BEST PRACTICE	CATEGORY
Reserve management	Nature conservation
Work/making contact with local communities	Community based & locally focussed work
Watch clubs and materials	Informal education
Reserves quality	Nature conservation
Partnerships	Internal organisation and management
LA relationships	Internal organisation and management
Habitat conservation for future	Nature conservation
Fundraising	Internal organisation and management
Influencing decision makers	Political communication
General media use and publicity	Media and image focussed work
Engaging local interest	Community based and locally focussed work
Creating local action	Community based and locally focussed work
Reserve acquisition	Nature conservation
Use of local knowledge	Community based and locally focussed work
People work incl. adults	Community based and locally focussed work
Habitat/Species programmes	Nature conservation
Urban projects	Community based and locally focussed work
Nothing/Don't know	Nothing / Don't know
Visitor centres	Informal education
Programmes of educational activities offered	Informal education
Dialogue with farmers/landowners	Community based and locally focussed work
Schools work	Formal education
Credibility/good reputation	Media and image focussed work
Events	Community based and locally focussed work
Volunteer involvement / good volunteer relationships	Community based and locally focussed work
Use of scientific/non emotional approach	Media and image focussed work
Value of Volunteers for trust work	Community based and locally focussed work
Working with young people + secondary school work	Formal education
Advocacy/Empowerment	Informal education
Conservation at a *local* level	Community based and locally focussed work
Campaigning/lobbying	Political communication
Wide audience reached	Informal education
Education/Study centres	Informal education
Providing first hand experiences for people	Informal education
Monitoring	Internal organisation and management
Teamwork & links between Cons and Ed	Internal organisation and management
Qualified staff	Internal organisation and management
Volunteers doing education work	Internal organisation and management
Surviving with personnel/financial difficulties	Internal organisation and management
Working with Industries/businesses	Political communication
Return of people	Informal education
Working with specific groups	Community based and locally focussed work
Meeting schools' needs	Formal education
Environmental Art	Informal education
Internal training	Internal organisation and management
Working as part of WT partnership	Internal organisation and management
Enthusiasm of Education staff	Internal organisation and management
Diplomacy	Political communication
School grounds work	Formal education
Use of specific site or location	Community based or locally focussed work
Development/business plans	Internal organisation and management
Working as an NGO	Internal organisation and management
Explaining reasons behind work	Political communication
Recording programmes	Nature conservation
Staff out posted to sites	Internal organisation and management
Being financially viable and developing	Internal organisation and management
Conservation planning	Nature conservation

BEST PRACTICE	CATEGORY
Having a membership	Internal organisation and management
Face to face work	Informal education
Reserve interpretation	Community based and locally focussed work
Education on reserves	Community based and locally focussed work
Play schemes	Informal education
Family days	Informal education
Breadth of activities offered	Informal education
Reserve access	Informal education
Attitudes to education staff	Internal organisation and management
Work on local BAPs	Nature conservation
Working as a region	Internal organisation and management
'Bottom up' work	Internal organisation and management
Director General's work	Internal organisation and management
Director of Education's work	Internal organisation and management
Organisation of committees/working groups	Internal organisation and management
Support from trustees	Internal organisation and management
Education staff support conservation aims and work	Nature conservation
Air of competence	Media and image focussed work
Friendly/approachable	Media and image focussed work
Wildlife gardens and demonstration habitats	Informal education
Wildlife holidays/ holiday activities	Informal education

6.3.1.1.2 Best practices for partnerships and/or individual Trusts

From response to interview questions 5 and 6, it was evident that in some cases there were responses where best practices appeared to be more strongly related to the work of the Wildlife Trust partnership as a whole, rather than to individual Trusts. There were also responses that were more specific to the work of individual Trusts. For example, for both individual Trusts and for the partnership, responses within the category of 'nature conservation' were reported. However, more responses (50) assigned nature conservation as a Wildlife Trust best practice compared with those (38) identifying it as a strength of individual Trusts.

In contrast, only 1 response identified 'formal education' as a best practice of The Wildlife Trusts partnership; 16 responses regarded it as a success for individual Trusts, signifying unequal strengths in formal education across The Wildlife Trusts as a whole.

Apart from best practices in the two categories: 'community based and locally focussed work' and the afore-mentioned 'nature conservation', all other categories of response signified that strengths were individual Trusts' strengths rather than strengths of the partnership. Thus it can be understood where individual Trusts are defining their own achievements and where the partnership has clear strengths as a whole. This will be discussed further in the Discussion chapter.

6.3.1.1.3 Differences between responses according to role of respondent

Figure 24 that follows on page 188, displays the number of responses in each of the categories, according to roles of personnel, that is: educational, directorial or other (as defined at the start of 6.3.1.1).

Figure 24 Best practice responses according to role of respondent

CATEGORY of BEST PRACTICE	NUMBER OF RESPONSES		
	EDUCATION STAFF n=85	DIRECTORS n=32	OTHERS n=14
Nature conservation	41	29	12
Internal organisation and management	26	25	12
Nothing / Don't know	2	4	1
Community & Education			
Community based and locally focussed work	39	22	6
Informal education	50	12	7
Political style of communication	34	17	8
Media and image focussed work	22	18	5
Formal education	30	5	1

It can be noted that in terms of the categories 'internal organisation and management' and 'media and image focussed work', educational staff and directors have similar views on the partnership and individual Trust successes.

From the number of responses shown in Figure 24, it is noticeable that directors do not see either informal or formal education as a particular strength of Wildlife Trusts' work. Many more education staff view both formal and informal education to be some of the best work carried out. It might be thought that educators might see education work as a strength, because the work is *their* work. However, this does not necessarily account for the different opinions since a large proportion of educators also believe nature conservation to be Wildlife Trust best practice. Nearly all (29 of 32) directors view nature conservation to be best practice. It must be taken into account that significantly fewer directors were interviewed, (32 as opposed to 85 educational staff), yet this fact is not totally responsible for the differences in views amongst the respondents.

6.3.1.1.4 Respondent-role and partnership/individual Trust best practice.

When responses from different personnel are examined in terms of how they relate to partnership or individual Trust work, some patterns appear. Internal management is seen to be much more of a strength for the education staff's own Trust, (18 responses) than for the Wildlife Trust partnership (9 responses). There are similarities with education staff's views on informal education: 33 responses define it as an individual Trust strength and 17 as a partnership strength. The same applies to formal education: 25 responses define it as in individual Trust strength and 5 as a partnership strength. More education staff (14 responses) identify media and image work as something their own Trusts do well, only 8 see it as a best practice of the partnership.

There are also distinctive features of directors' responses on best practice. For example, 'political communication' is viewed as more of a best practice for the

directors' own Trusts (13 responses). Only 4 directors view this as a partnership strength.

These patterns have implication, both for an understanding of the differences between directors' and educational staff's views, and also for what is happening on an ad hoc basis in some Trusts, but not across the partnership.

6.3.1.1.5 Details of the top 5 best practices

It can be seen that the top 5 best practices in Figure 23 (page 186) cut across the range of categories. It now seems helpful to examine these 5 best practices in more detail.

Reserve management (20 Trusts) was characterised by statements such as:

> We manage land in an exemplary manner.

Yet someone in the same Trust explained:

> Within reason, we are a good manager of land. Not many people know. We are one of the biggest secrets of the United Kingdom.

Some personnel reported characteristics of well-managed reserves, referring to the success of using small numbers of people to manage small reserves. Wetland reserves were mentioned several times as cases where good management was provided.

Reserve management, for some, had not always gone well or perhaps was difficult to gauge in terms of success:

> Management of our 80 reserves is getting better.

> The whole conservation side [is a best practice] – in recent years and very recently, management of sites. We have had criticism in the past for our 26 nature reserves not being managed properly...and we haven't taken on any more. We've just identified sources of funds to oversee conservation.

> The general perception is that managing nature reserves is not easily quantifiable or measured.

There were also views that reserve management, although perceived as successful in many cases, could be tackled in a different way involving more people as the following comment from an education officer illustrates:

> In my short experience I get the feeling that acquisition of land and its management is an area we excel in. There's lots of deep thought and invaluable discussions in dealing with people's land. In some ways, it's rather an old fashioned approach – rather than hoping local people get involved.

Throughout the interview questions that asked about best practice, there were many cases where reserve management came first among a number of best practices. This

gave the impression of reserve management as a primary strength, a unique feature of the Trusts' work or indeed an aim of The Wildlife Trusts. This was characterised by both directors' and educators' views:

> ...management of nature reserves. That's the role of The Wildlife Trusts in the first place. If we look at Norfolk and Northumberland, that's where it all started...

> Without reservation, it's running our nature reserves 365 days a year. No other organisation does this. We have over 2000 reserves. It's a unique selling point to build on.

Working and making contact with local communities (12 Trusts) was reported as a major strength mainly by educational staff, often without details or further explanation. This work was frequently characterised by reference to successful 'initiatives' to engage local communities. According to an educational manager, 1 Trust had set in place what were referred to as LEI's or Local Environment Initiatives. An education manager enthused about the strengths of 2 other Trusts' work in a similar area:

> Work done in the community, people – involving them and taking their initiatives forward. Warwickshire and Birmingham have done some good neighbourhood initiatives. Residents and tenants have developed an agenda for improving their own environment in a number of ways, not just in nature conservation, but in access to green space celebrating their environment in arts and cultural ways and recycling initiatives.

For another urban Trust, 1 of the successful initiatives with local communities included a tree-dressing competition, based at the Trust's centre. The importance of local community work for another Trust was reported in terms of membership:

> The penetration within the local community... we have over 1000 members in an area of population of 44, 000. I think that's quite good.

Responses demonstrated a perceived association between local community work and Trust identities. A Trust director said that his Trust's strength was:

> Dealing with local communities. We are better than other conservation organisations.

Another director explained:

> What makes us different is our local action. Without that we'd have no identity.

Where **Wildlife Watch clubs and materials** (11 Trusts) were mentioned as best practice, the organisation and running of the clubs was often reported in terms of: health and safety policy, good Watch leaders and inclusion of Watch in Trusts' strategic planning. Sometimes Watch was praised as a way of encouraging wider involvement within a community:

> We do fantastic family days involving experts and Watch leaders. We set up trails round the reserve. It's the best way of getting the parents in.

A number of opinions from education staff illustrated strengths in the Watch materials produced at UK National Office. Watch projects that were flexible for use with different audiences were praised. The following education officer's comments described why Watch projects were deemed as successful partnership best practice:

> Watch has been very good, not always though. Some projects, especially earlier ones, have involved children so that they go on talking about them for ages. People remember doing stream surveys. They started at a 'meeting wildlife' level and then got down to action. Where children can meet regularly, parents are involved with leaders and others back people up - this is a recipe for an invaluable job.

For another member of staff, Watch was seen as best practice when used in schools; she also saw potential changes in the way Watch projects might be used for the future:

> ...from an education point of view, some packs under the Watch banner were attractive. Lots of schools used them. If packs could be aimed at school grounds, there would be a huge market for them.

The fourth ranked best practice was **Reserve quality** (11 Trusts). The responses in this category demonstrated a dominant theme of 'sense of pride' through ownership of 'good' reserves. These reserves were thought to be of good quality due to size, species and habitats and also location. According to 1 education manager, this sort of best practice included:

> Good *quality* nature reserves - medium sized, not huge expanses like the RSPB's, but sort of 5 to 50 acres or up to a hundred acres.

Another education manager said that his Trust's woodland and chalk grassland reserve sites were good compared to those of other organisations. 1 director saw success in The Wildlife Trusts' ownership of:

> ...good quality small pieces of nature that would get neglected without us.

By contrast, another education officer reported the high quality reserves to be those the Director General referred to as 'mega reserves', for example large areas of wild woods.

Most Trusts referring to reserve quality focussed on the reserves as examples of rare, well managed habitat or 'key species' - in particular woodlands, meadows and bogs were quoted. For 2 Trusts, good quality reserves were urban. Their location made them a most important resource for both conservation and education.

The **Partnerships** (11 Trusts) category did not include references to local authorities that were grouped separately as 'relationships with local authorities'. Only education personnel mentioned partnerships.

Most of the comments in this category described partnerships as work with 'other organisations'. There follows a complete list of partnership institutions that were revealed in response to interview questions 5 and 6:

- Banks
- British Petroleum
- Countryside Commission (for Millennium Greens and Community Forests projects)
- Countryside Council for Wales
- Department of Environment Transport and the Regions
- Energy Companies (National Grid, Celtic Energy)
- English Nature
- Environment Wales
- ESSO
- European funding bodies
- Heritage Lottery Fund
- Landfill Tax
- Landscape 2000
- Local businesses
- Local charitable Trusts (e.g. Broads Authority Charitable Trust)
- Local television and media
- New Opportunities Fund (funding schools partnerships and play schemes)
- Other NGOs (Groundwork, BTCV, RSPB, Landlife)
- Other Trusts
- Owners of Trust-managed sites (National Air Traffic Services, National Car Parks)
- Rural Action
- Schools
- Scottish Heritage
- Single Regeneration Board
- Uniform Groups (Guides, Scouts, Brownies, Cubs)
- Universities and Colleges
- Water Companies

The partnerships were also described in terms of their success for planning and strategic purposes. This is highlighted by 1 education manager, who reported:

> We are good at working in partnerships and have been for 5 or 6 years. We don't try to go it alone. We talk to others and then can be more strategic.

Partnerships were also considered useful to enable Trusts to receive funding, manage sites and centres or, as this education manager suggested, to promote involvement and reach a wider audience of people:

> We are caring and supportive of people who we work with - formal, schools, the informal sector, disabled in the wider community. We encourage people to participate and partnerships are an opportunity for involvement.

Another education manager explained how partnerships were beneficial for promoting dialogue with others. The education manager suggested that dialogue with others, through partnership should be a key aim of The Wildlife Trusts.

6.3.1.2 Significant impact of The Wildlife Trusts' work with people

Interview Question 10 asked Trust personnel to give details of educational activities (discussed in section 6.2). Another part of this question asked personnel:

Question 10. What do you do that has real or significant impact on people?

Responses were less varied and numerous than the responses to questions about best practice. The number of responses from each Trust regarding significant impact, ranged from 1 to 10.

On page 194, Figure 25 provides a summary of the significant impacts highlighted by each Trust. The types of impact are then described and ranked in order of frequency. Impacts mentioned could not be categorised in exactly the same way as the best practices, although there were some noticeable similarities between the two sets of reported strengths (cases are identified in Chapter 7's discussion). The types of impact reported by personnel were quite clear but often bridged categories. This is because it was usual for interview responses to allude to more than 1 type of impact within the same answer or sentence; the categories themselves however were designed to be mutually exclusive. An example follows where 1 response bridges 2 categories; this response is repeated at the start of 6.3.1.2.1.

> Impact on individuals – I've had a school child come back with parents and grandparents. We've sustained interest (education officer).

This education officer's opinion refers to both the impact of school work and also the return of the schoolchild to the Trust; hence this response is in two categories of impact labelled 'schools' and 'return of people'.

Where several people within a Trust gave the same answer or where responses were repeated within a Trust, this has been treated as 1 response only (for further explanation see Methodology chapter, section 5.6.2.3). Here the data are presented so that the ranked response categories are each followed by examples that are either typical or interesting impacts.

Sometimes it could be gauged how personnel understood the term 'impact', sometimes it was not clear. Impact was defined in a number of ways for example: as activity perceived to create a lasting impression on people or conversely to catch attention immediately. Impact was also evident to personnel when work was seen to generate enthusiasm, a change in people's behaviour or simply gain the attention of large numbers of people. However, ways in which The Wildlife Trusts' work was thought to have a real or significant impact *on people* were not always so easily identified. During interviews, 12 Trusts offered responses that debated the difficulty in gauging impact. These 12 Trusts' responses were grouped into a category of their own labelled 'don't know / difficult to judge'. They are referred to among the other categories, being marked with *. All 14 categories are shown in Figure 25 and illustrated in the category descriptions that follow on. Each category description includes quoted examples from Trust personnel.

Figure 25 Perceptions of significant impacts

Trust	Avon	Beds	BBONT	B'ham	Brecknock	Cheshire	Cornwall	Cumbria	Derby	Devon	Dorset	Durham	Essex	G'morgan	Gloucs	Gwent	Hants	Hereford	Herts	Kent	Lancs	Leicester	Lincs	London	Manx	M'gomery	Norfolk	N'land	N. Wales	Notts	Radnor	Scottish	Sheffield	Shrops	Somerset
Schools work	●	●	●	●		●	●			●			●		●					●	●	●	●	●			●	●		●	●		●	●	●
'Experiences'	●	●	●		●		●								●		●				●	●			●			●		●	●	●	●	●	●
Community opportunities			●	●	●	●					●		●		●		●	●		●			●	●		●	●	●					●		
Informal education and Watch			●			●		●			●			●	●						●			●			●	●				●	●	●	●
Publicity			●				●		●		●	●	●		●	●		●					●	●	●				●				●		
Partnerships				●		●		●	●				●	●										●	●			●		●		●	●		
Campaigning	●		●			●			●						●	●			●					●							●		●		
People work							●						●		●		●								●			●								
Don't know / difficult to say						●					●	●	●													●	●							●	
Empowerment	●		●	●				●		●				●		●																		
Centres									●			●	●								●		●				●				●				
Return of people	●					●			●				●									●													●
Internal management									●												●			●	●		●					●		●	
Conservation and reserves										●		●							●						●							●			

Trust	Staffs	Suffolk	Surrey	Sussex	Tees Valley	Ulster	Warwick	West Wales	Wilts	Worcs	Yorks	National Office
Schools work	●		●	●	●	●		●	●	●		
'Experiences'	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●			
Community opportunities		●	●	●	●	●	●		●	●	●	
Informal education and Watch						●	●	●	●		●	●
Publicity		●					●			●	●	
Partnerships						●				●		
Campaigning						●			●	●	●	
People Work		●	●	●		●	●		●	●		
Don't know / difficult to say			●			●	●		●	●		
Empowerment				●		●			●	●		●
Centres	●						●					
Return of people			●	●			●					
Internal management		●		●								●
Conservation and reserves									●		●	

6.3.1.2.1 Schools Work

Activities of significant impact within the category of schools work were mentioned by 29 Trusts and included: work in school classrooms; creation of green areas for schools; outreach to schools; work with GCSE and 'A' level students and unspecified schools work. 10 Trusts reported school grounds work, 4 as their only schools work and 6 as part of a wider schools programme.

> Impact on individuals – I've had a school child come back with parents and grandparents. We've sustained interest (education officer).

> Our direct work with children, primary and middle mainly, plus occasional GCSE work. There's our practical work on reserves with some high schools...and we have an urban officer based in schools (education officer).

> Our school visits programme attracts about 5000 children a year. The work we do means the attainment targets can be ticked off by teachers (director).

6.3.1.2.2 Outdoor/Wildlife Experiences

This category of activities ranking equally with 'schools' included providing opportunities for people to experience: direct contact with wildlife; hands on work; sensory experiences; exploration; discovery and outdoor experiences (including practical conservation and experiences on reserves mentioned by 9 Trusts). In total, 29 Trusts stated outdoor/wildlife experiences, for example:

> ...When the children do pond dipping for the first time – it's their faces. Once this was recorded on video and you could hear the excitement in their voices, they really did enjoy that. Some children don't get outside (education officer)

> Getting children involved. The close-up contact with wildlife has an impact: the pond dipping, mammal tracking, bird watching and handling equipment. For kids who don't get in the countryside, getting wet or meeting a frog is magic (community officer).

6.3.1.2.3 Community and Local Opportunities

21 Trusts mentioned activities within this category. The activities included: local events; exhibition projects; drama; 'road shows'; use of local volunteers; community projects and local involvement.

> 'A walk on the wild side' has impact. It's a walk/talk activity with youth groups or families. We also have impact with our 7 community environment officers in informal education working with the councils to give advice (education officer).

> Providing *regional* opportunities to share enthusiasm and develop people's interests. The school grounds work and the recycling work opened people's eyes (education manager).

> *It's difficult to say... the *localised* impact I hope (director).

6.3.1.2.4 Informal Education and Wildlife Watch

Responses in this category came from 19 Trusts, 10 of which specified Watch work. 6 Trusts' activities in this category were reported to include Watch only whilst 4 Trusts provided other informal education activities. They include references to activities with children, play schemes, pre-school work, youth work, summer activities programmes and other educational work not specified as schools activities.

> Watch is a secure structure compared to formal education. It has won a reputation and compares well to the YOC (watch officer).

> * It takes years to hear the impact, but families do return to Watch things (education officer).

> The Watch Club – we have Watch children who are now PhD students in Environmental Studies. Although it's not necessarily a cause and effect relationship, we cannot deny that we haven't had some impact (education manager).

6.3.1.2.5 Publicity

Where publicity was thought to have significant impact upon people it was through use of flyers, radio, newspaper, television, public relations work and project promotion. 18 Trusts' responses fell within this category.

> We have a target of 150 media items a year; perhaps we should ask someone in the street about what has impact. Column inches and airtime must mean an impact (director).

> Being an educator is not an instant thing, but our leaflets could reach numbers, especially those printed by the Department of Tourism and in the Tourist Information Offices (education officer).

> *I don't know – is it our community officer or press releases? Who gets to most people? It's probably our door-to-door recruitment (director).

6.3.1.2.6 Partnerships

This type of impact was described as work with others; doing joint projects; use of other's services; helping other groups/organisations; gaining business links and sponsorship deals. Partnerships were reported by 14 Trusts, which gave examples including:

> Our partnerships have an impact. Realistically, I couldn't do things on my own without organisations, businesses and communities (education officer).

> Scottish Provident employees got experience in practical conservation. Our previous volunteer co-ordinator had good business links (education officer).

6.3.1.2.7 Campaigning

This category comprised responses from 14 Trusts. Responses included lobbying; influencing planning decisions; giving advice; Biodiversity Action Plan work and specific species or habitat campaigns.

> The 2 public enquiries caught attention (director).

> The Biodiversity Challenge could have impact. Each habitat has a working group taking action for each species. It's a great way forward as an offshoot of Rio, to include Biodiversity in planning. Councils have signed up and put money into it...we should hang on to it (education officer).

> Our lobbying has an impact – traditionally with the local borough in terms of planning (education manager).

6.3.1.2.8 People work

People work was that specified as 'people work'. It also included: work with adults, parents, courses and training. These kinds of responses came from 13 Trusts:

> Someone who knows their stuff gives good training to adults, though they are often the 'converted', it has a good impact (education manager).

> Events are opportunities to attract many people and our adult courses are good (voluntary education officer).

> * Working with a lot of people with an objective of no confrontation is very important. We are proud of that, but I wonder what impact it has? (education officer).

6.3.1.2.9 Don't know / Difficult to judge

Reponses from 12 Trusts fitted into this category demonstrating the difficulty in measuring or judging real impact on people. These responses also included discussions as to how an impact might be evaluated. For examples see those included in other categories, marked with a *.

6.3.1.2.10 Empowerment

12 Trusts gave responses within this category. Examples of empowerment believed to have a significant impact included encouraging people to 'care', carrying out work for resultant action or change of behaviour. Work within the Trusts' young people's project Children for Change project fitted into this category, as young people were empowered to 'take up their own agenda' addressing environmental issues they viewed to have local importance.

> Schools do follow up the recycling work we do with them. We want them to follow up the school grounds work too...*our community issues campaigning means that people can actually make a difference* (education manager and *director*).

> The Children for Change project. We have one group planned for children to take their own agenda with water quality on lakes. They are 9-13 year olds. It appears to have evolved out of Watch, the kids are now ex-members. *Though Cumbria Wildlife Trust is not specifically involved those kind of groups are open to most influence and can have influence on their communities* (education officer and *watch officer*).

6.3.1.2.11 Centres

Responses within the 'centres' category came from 9 Trusts. They included use of visitor centres, study centres, specific sites and facilities.

> The visitor centre has impact; it makes things easy to understand for the lay person. It's a good starting point for them (director).

> Many reserves are not visible to the public, so our centres I think make an impact with over a hundred thousand people a year visiting them. Big events have an impact, but that's relatively short term compared with a centre, which can then have a long term impact (chair of education committee).

6.3.1.2.12 Return of people

Responses in this category did not specifically state an impact arising from people remembering and/or returning to Trusts. These responses reflected more *how Trusts knew* they were having an impact on people. Responses came from 9 Trusts.

> Some of our children come back as volunteers (education manager)

> The return of kids and adults shows we have impact (education officer)

6.3.1.2.13 Internal Management

The 9 Trusts responding within this category reported the impact of volunteers or trustees; internal communication; internal training; Trust 'philosophy' and assistance between teams or divisions.

> In our vision, education is there as part of conservation activity, even though it's not labelled as education (director).

> Without volunteers, we could not run the schools programme. Volunteers keep our groups down to 10 children maximum (education manager).

6.3.1.2.14 Conservation and reserves

Responses within this category suggested that an impact upon people arose from: land management; visibility of reserves; acquisition and work on reserves; wildlife conservation projects and species programmes. 7 Trusts responded in this category.

> Buying a new, big reserve gets the public involved. It gets good publicity (education/development officer).

> Our nature reserves will have an impact. We are going to have an officer dedicated to reserves and linking them to the community (director).

As already mentioned, the activities perceived to have significant impact were not classified according to the best practice categories. Yet as with the best practice activities, it is clear that the activities having *impact on people* are predominantly activities that could be classed as 'communication and education'. 68% of reported activities of significant impact could be considered to be 'communication and education'.

Nature conservation work is not represented so greatly among the significant impact responses as it was within Trust personnel's perceptions of best practice. Those who did refer to the potential impact of conservation frequently did so by linking it with other work such as through projects raising public awareness of species conservation, through publicity of reserves or through carrying out conservation involving urban communities. 1 educational officer spoke of conservation's impact via an educational means:

> Also we have an impact within the Trust, with projects not necessarily defined as education – in conservation. The conservation department's projects have impact. I have worked to develop the reserve's education policies putting in funding applications to develop reserves' potential. It wouldn't happen with out us.

6.3.1.3 Outside views of The Wildlife Trusts' Strengths

6.3.1.3.1 Responses from visitors' questionnaires

Each Trust was given a questionnaire to be completed by Trust site visitors. The response rate was very low: only 6 out of 46 Trusts returned questionnaires. In total, 40 questionnaires were returned from the list of Trusts below; the numbers denote how many questionnaires were received from each Trust.

Hampshire Wildlife Trust	14
Ulster Wildlife Trust	11
Scottish Wildlife Trust	7
Shropshire Wildlife Trust	4
Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust	3
Suffolk Wildlife Trust	1

In order to determine the 40 visitors' views on Trusts' strengths, responses from the questionnaire Questions 5, 8 and 13 were used:

Question 5. What do you consider to be the best aspects of your present visit here?

Question 8. If you have visited other Wildlife Trust sites, please tell us which place you have enjoyed visiting the most and why?

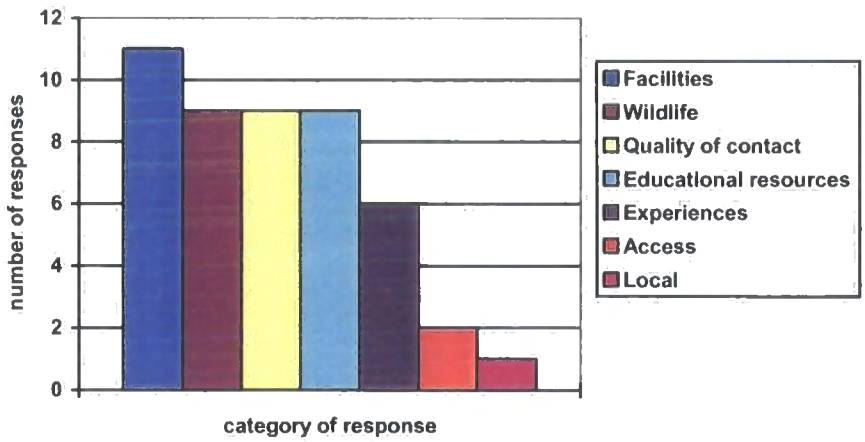
Question 13. In the space below, please feel free to make any further comments on your views of the educational work of The Wildlife Trusts, either at this site or in general, e.g. What should they be engaged in,

what do you think they are engaged in, and how successful they are at helping to make biodiversity relevant to people.

Responses to questions 5 and 13 were analysed together to produce Figure 26 that follows, showing visitors' best aspects of Trust sites. Question 8 was analysed separately and provided the results for Figure 27 (page 201), titled 'Reasons for visitors' enjoyment of other Trusts sites'.

The combined responses from questions 5 and 13 follow in Figure 26.

Figure 26 Best aspects of Trusts sites – responses from visitors



As the chart shows, the Trusts' facilities were the most favourable aspect for the 40 visitors visiting 6 of The Wildlife Trusts. The **facilities** category was created from responses referring to visitor centres, hides, bird-viewing areas, identification boards and displays.

Wildlife, the second category, was enjoyed mostly for the sites' variety of habitats, birds and tree species.

Responses within the **quality of contact** category referred to contact with Wildlife Trust personnel. 1 of these visitors saw the best part of the visit to be the '...excellent background knowledge from the warden'. The response: 'Excellent expertise from the course director' is another example within this category. The enthusiasm of guides, volunteers, the advice, planning and structure of environmental education courses were all included in visitors' responses within this category.

Where responses illustrated positive feelings about teaching resources, responses were placed in a category labelled **educational resources**. Some responses in this category stated that Trusts had given visitors ideas for using their own school grounds, carrying out science and maths curriculum activities. These visitor-teachers also valued 1 Trust's educational workbooks, offered during their visits.

Experiences were best aspects for 6 visitors; nearly all experiences related to hands-on and practical work that children could carry out on site. 1 Ulster visitor's questionnaire reported: children enjoy the practical hands-on experiences and learn a

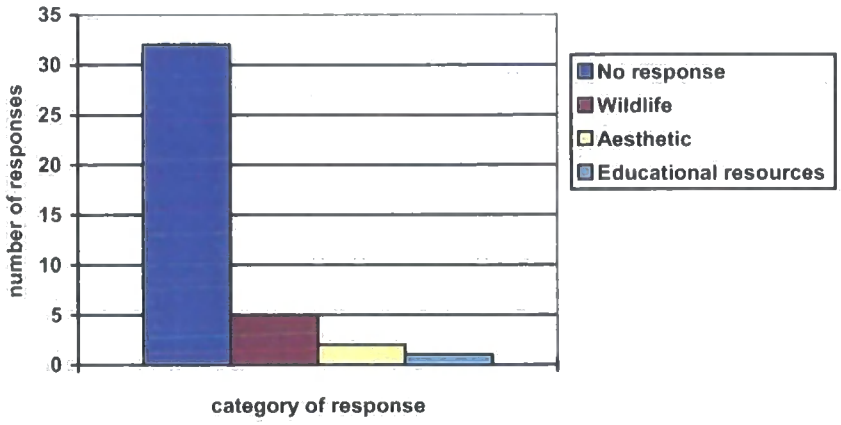
lot more through this approach. Another person, who had taken children to this Trust, commented that the children enjoyed pond dipping and activities related to insects and mini beasts. The practical aspects of Key Stage 3 ecology were appreciated, too.

The **access** category was created from 2 visitors' responses to 2 separate Trusts: 1 praised the site's open access and the other praised the wheelchair access to the Trust.

Just 1 visitor gave a response within the final category in the chart. The **local** category refers to 1 person's enjoyment from learning about the *local* environment through her visit.

In answer to Question 8, visitors were asked to state if they had visited other Wildlife Trust sites; they were asked which they had enjoyed most and why. The following Figure 27 illustrates that most visitors left this question blank, possibly indicating that most had not visited other sites.

Figure 27 Reasons for visitors' enjoyment of other Trusts' sites



Of those people who reported reasons for enjoying other Wildlife Trust sites, **wildlife** was the favourite part of the visit for 5 people. The 3 people who favoured the **aesthetic** aspect of their previous visits had enjoyed sites' views, aspect and wildness. The 1 reference to **educational resources** praised another Trust site's use of '...a variety of resources which are child-centred'.

6.3.1.3.2 Responses from questionnaires to independent sample

In order to determine the independent sample's views on Trusts' strengths, responses from the following questions were used:

Question 1. Have you heard of the organisation called The Wildlife Trusts? [Yes / No]

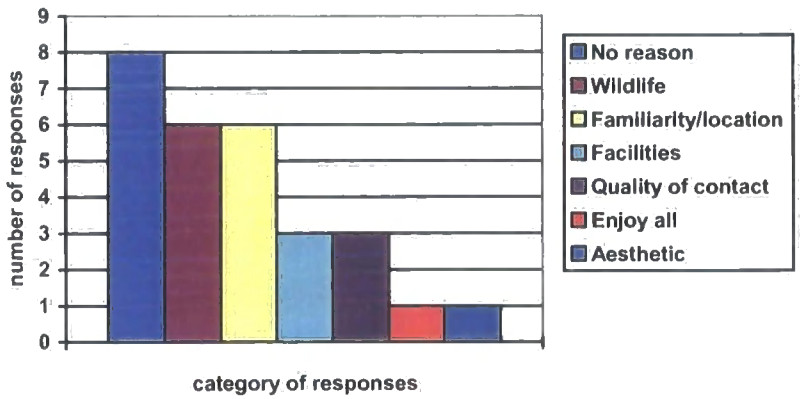
Question 6. Which site have you most enjoyed visiting and why?

The independent sample was comprised of two groups: (i) 21 individuals from the Local Agenda 21 Community Action Forum in County Durham (ii) 43 students attending environmental courses within degree programmes at Durham University.

Questionnaires were returned from 21 individuals from the Local Agenda 21 Forum, 10 of whom stated working for or supporting an existing environmental organisation. All these people had heard of The Wildlife Trusts and most (16 out of 21) had visited a Trust site. 3 had not visited a Trust site and 2 were not sure if the sites they had visited belonged to The Wildlife Trusts.

The best aspects of Trusts visits for the Community Action Forum sample can be tabulated in Figure 28 as follows.

Figure 28 Best aspects of sites – responses from Community Action Forum



The 8 **no reason** responses within Figure 28 included responses from those individuals who did not state a favourite site or those who had not been to one.

6 forum members gave **wildlife** as the reason for enjoyment of Trust sites. Answers in this category praised individual sites' variety of habitats, winter bird populations, early summer ground flora or simply just 'the wildlife'

Where forum-members enjoyed sites because of their **familiarity or location**, 2 people stated that the Trust location was good and 1 response indicated that sites were favoured almost 'by accident'. 1 member of the Forum wrote: 'It's near to where I live'. Another said she liked the site '...just because I've been there more times than the others'. For 1 member of this sample, the frequency of visits to a site had enabled her to '...feel involved with it'.

The 3 people who identified Trust site **facilities** as a best aspect of their visit, described the facilities as 'excellent', with 'a good visitor centre' and with 'good bird hides' respectively.

Responses that showed **quality of contact** to be a favoured aspect of sites, described them as 'child-friendly', 'good for education' and providing high quality 'guided tours, identifying species with information about each'.

1 person simply **enjoyed all** sites he had visited. Another forum member, whose response was placed in the **aesthetic** category, found the beauty of the Trust-managed SSSI to be the best part of her visit.

Responses from the remainder of the independent sample – the students – revealed less about Trust strengths. Of the 43 students' questionnaires, 25 students had never heard of The Wildlife Trusts. Only 6 students had visited a Trust site; 32 had not and 5 were not sure. Of the 6 students who reported a visit, 4 stated the aspects they had enjoyed most. For 1 person it was: 'The experience, having contact with the animals'. Another person enjoyed seeing the wildlife – red squirrels. 1 student praised the visitor centre and the other response enjoyed the Trust site visit because it was 'pretty'.

Rather than revealing detailed positive experiences from visiting Trusts, the responses from the independent sample more clearly point to *lack* of experience and awareness of The Wildlife Trusts amongst this group. This low level of awareness is also referred to within the section on the subject of the Trusts' weaknesses.

6.3.2 Weaknesses

This section is split into three parts according to the data sources analysed, in order to understand weaknesses in the Trusts' provision of education. Firstly, section 6.3.2.1 examines the weaknesses revealed by 2 questions used in interviews with Trust personnel. This is intended to give an overview of the *internally* perceived weaknesses of the Trusts' education provision. Secondly, section 6.3.2.2 examines *external* views of the Trusts' weaknesses derived from a question asked of the independent student sample, 1 questionnaire question from the independent Community Action Forum sample and 1 questionnaire question from the visitor sample. Lastly, section 6.3.2.3 presents weaknesses evident through analysis of the researcher's field notes.

6.3.2.1 Internally perceived weaknesses revealed by interviews

The interview questions used to reveal Trusts' perceptions of weaknesses in educational provision were:

Question 7. How could you do it, (i.e. what you do best), better?

Question 20. What or who are the main obstacles to progress for you?

Question 7 was useful for understanding weaknesses because most responses actually stated problems or weaknesses, rather than means of improving educational practice. Responses to both questions 7 and 20 were all placed within the following 6 categories:

1. Management and organisation	40 Trust responses
2. Resources	40 Trust responses
3. Attitudes	25 Trust responses
4. Focus	24 Trust responses
5. Image	23 Trust responses
6. Political and external problems	21 Trust responses

Examples of responses within all categories of weakness are now presented with selected quotes from Trust personnel.

6.3.2.1.1 Management and organisation

Figure 29 'Management and organisation' as weaknesses

Subcategories within 'management & organisation'	Number of Trust Responses
Lack of strategy	22
Lack of communication; inter-Trust competitiveness	20
Problems with running Watch	11
Staff: development, training, career structure, short-term employment.	8
Difficulties in dealing with Trust growth and development	7
Difficulties with or for National Office	6
Problems with volunteers hindering development / not used for education	4

Management and organisation was 1 of the 2 top-ranking categories of weakness with 40 separate Trusts commenting on 1 or more of the management problems affecting educational work. Comments within this category came from education and directorial staff alike.

An education officer, discussing the problem of the Trusts' management and organisation, commented on the lack of strategy suggesting:

> The main problem for environmental education, for the environmental movement rather, historically has been the very unprofessional, unstructured approach to communication with the public. It's through our own fault. We use the wrong sorts of statements, i.e. 'x species are lost per day'. That's no use. So what?

Sometimes the inter-trust competitiveness, or lack of communication between Trusts was a matter of divide between Trusts across England, Scotland and Wales. This education officer felt the existence of a north south divide:

> The north south divide is in people's minds. The southern bias could be taken away. Southern Trusts get first dip in the pot.

6.3.2.1.2 Resources

Figure 30 'Resources' as a weaknesses

Subcategories within 'resources'	Number of Trust responses
Insufficient staff / skills for education	23
Simply 'lack of resources'	19
Lack of core funding - work is too project or sponsor tied	13
The need to improve fund-raising / raise funds for educational work	14
Infrastructure- buildings and/or geographical location of trust or sites	13
Competition - resources also sought after by outside organisations	6

Education personnel in particular perceived that educational projects receive insufficient resources. Responses highlighting insufficient staff and/or skills were frequently presented in terms of the need for better resource allocation for the children's club Wildlife Watch. This comment from an education manager is illustrative:

> We could do more if we had a full time person for Watch. As a product it is excellent. The delivery in Sussex is very good with the resources available. But we need to look at how to do it...some are good, some are struggling.

This education manager discussed an aspect of under-resourced education within his Trust:

> It's easier to find funding to buy areas of land than it is for education projects. We need human resources. With more resources, we'd increase the quality and quantity of school visits. We would have an active system to take groups to nature reserves where there would be an education person involved.

6.3.2.1.3 Attitudes

Figure 31 'Attitudes' as a weakness

Subcategories within 'attitudes'	Number of Trust Responses
Internal attitudes towards education, compared with conservation	20
External people's attitudes towards conservation / environment	2
External people's attitudes towards education	1

Negative attitudes towards Wildlife Trust educational practice were mostly noticed by educational personnel; the negative attitudes were frequently reported to be held by trustees, or 'key members':

> Key members are thinking that reserves are for wildlife and not for people. As I want to get people out onto reserves, there is a potential conflict...generally amount staff and trustees. People don't have a clear definition of environmental education. It means all things to all people. The Trust pays lip service to education but that's not translating into money, resources, personnel or equipment.

Lack of understanding or knowledge regarding Trusts' education work, was an attitude highlighted by an education officer of another Trust:

> There is less knowledge and interest among council members for education. We have fewer allies than in conservation!

6.3.2.1.4 Focus

Figure 32 'Focus' as a weakness

Subcategories within 'focus'	Number of Trust Responses
Focus too broad, or too many educational activities, too little time	13
Focus of educational work to limited / need to reach wider audience	11

Just over half the Trusts indicated weaknesses in their own or the partnership's educational work, either in the context of it being too broad or too narrow. Once again, alluding to difficulties in management or lack of strategy, interview responses included statements such as those in the following examples. The first response is from a director and the second from an education officer:

> We are flat out just covering our basic responsibilities

> We communicate better between ourselves, but there is a technology issue. We are just getting computerised...really there is just too much going on.

There were those personnel who saw the need to develop educational work, including training and improving education/communication skills across the staff:

> ...We could achieve more if we weren't so narrow in our vision. For example we need training for our staff - how to engage with the public, for reserve staff or education for conservation and marketing staff, for working with people so they could see there was a value in it.

6.3.2.1.5 Image

Figure 33 'Image' as a weakness

Subcategories within 'image'	Number of Trust Responses
Identity, publicity, poor image	20
Elitist image	5

Views on Trusts' poor image and public identity were held across a variety of personnel interviewed. Some thought the image problem was a lack of national profile, others felt it a matter of communicating with the public in inappropriate ways. 1 education officer reported that The Wildlife Trusts' image had not, historically, been good at cultivating relationships. A director from another Trust suggested why difficulties existed in the creation of partnerships:

> Historically we have a problem with relationships with people. There's been a lack of partnership in the past.

> We tend not to take on outside partnership easily, because our own identity gets diluted and we don't get the credit.

6.3.2.1.6 Political and external

Figure 34 'Political and external' problems as weaknesses

Subcategories within 'political & external'	Number of Trust responses
Governmental restrictions – European, national or local levels	10
Schools – restrictions associated with NC requirements, limited spending	9
Weak wildlife legislation, conservation policies, CAP	7

Weaknesses that have been categorised as 'political and external' problems included limitations imposed on Trusts from external sources. The governmental restrictions were described as problematic for a number of reasons, in particular because of inadequate funding for Local Authorities and because of the perceived need for central government changes:

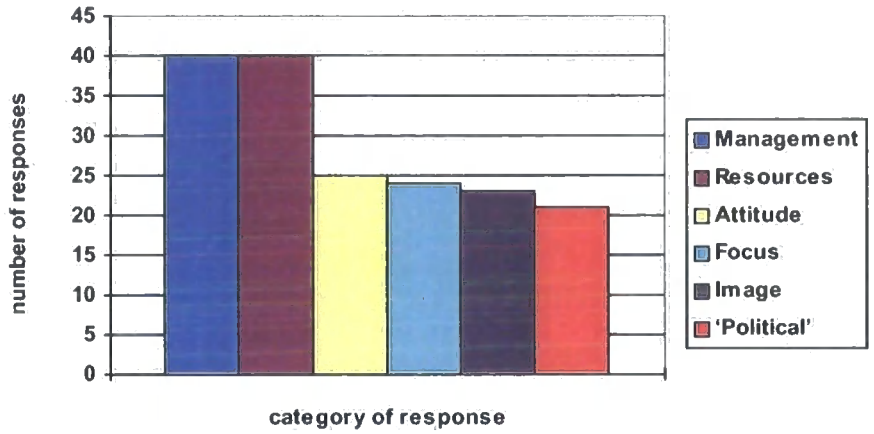
> LA's are strapped for cash so it's not a priority. It needs a national policy – hopefully Sustainable Development will be a theme for the future.

Wildlife Trusts reported that pressures to charge schools for environmental education hindered the process of gaining support from teachers. The demands of other curriculum subjects were also thought to prevent some teachers from making time for environmental education. 1 education officer from an urban Trust commented:

> Schools are difficult to get hold of. Teachers are very stressed with the literacy hour and inspections. Some schools are really keen to get hold of us...others keep us away.

The following Figure 35 summarises in graphical form the perceptions of major areas of weakness affecting educational work, as revealed from within the Trusts themselves:

Figure 35 Major weaknesses in Trusts' educational work



6.3.2.2 Externally perceived weaknesses – revealed by questionnaires

Questionnaires revealed weaknesses, from the perspectives of both visitors and the independent sample. In particular, weaknesses from the visitor sample were evident through responses to Question 7. Responses from questions 10, 1 and 4 were also used to identify externally perceived weaknesses:

Question 7. Can you think of any ways in which your present visit could have been more interesting and rewarding? (asked of visitors)

Question 10. Please feel free to make any further comments on your views of the educational work of The Wildlife Trusts, e.g. what they should be engaged in, what you think they are engaged in and how successful you think they are at making biodiversity relevant to people (asked of visitors and independent sample)

Question 1. Have you heard of the organisation called The Wildlife Trusts? [Yes / No] (asked of independent sample)

Question 4. Why do you think The Wildlife Trusts exist and what is their main function? (asked of independent sample)

6.3.2.2.1 Visitors' responses

27 out of 40 visitors offered no response to Question 7. This could be interpreted to mean that visitors were very satisfied with their visit. 2 people suggested they would alter their own plans to improve their visits. There were 12 people who suggested improvements; the author interpreted their responses as indications of weak spots in educational provision. The responses included a category of weaknesses associated with **site interpretation and information** and included 5 responses with the following requests for: more information and greater reference to wildlife; clearer instructions and information sheets to help with identification. There were 4 responses that fell within a category of **facilities and access**. Examples in this category included the following written quotes from visitors:

> More use could be made of the centre – may be for local naturalists to do study and fieldwork.

> There could be a greater variety of species on site and the chance to walk further on a restricted reserve.

Responses from the remaining 3 visitors suggested some weaknesses categorised as **teaching and learning resources**. People suggested that Trusts should develop:

> An awareness of the concentration span and the detail required by 10 year olds. Some of the guides had difficulty in gauging these.

> Perhaps worksheets, that could be more closely tied in to the Key Stage 3 curriculum.

At the end of the visitors' questionnaires, the Trusts' weak **publicity** was once again revealed in responses to Question 10. Opinions were offered by 5 respondents, 1 of whom who highlighted the need to:

> raise the profile of the Trusts, by offering to visit schools, to give talks prior to visits or to help more schools to know about their work and so attract more visitors.

1 visitor proposed that more money should be spent on:

> ...advertising their location and local initiatives.

Another visitor proposed that the Trusts should invest more money in **Wildlife Watch**, in particular in its publicity, in Watch leaders and in the promotion of after-school clubs. 1 visitor suggested employment of more **permanent staff** to deliver educational programmes. The final suggestion for improvement was for Trusts to create greater opportunities for naturalists to become more involved in **recording on reserves**.

6.3.2.2.2 Independent sample's responses

In answer to Question 1, more than half the student sample (24 out of 43) said that they had **never heard of The Wildlife Trusts**. Of those who had, only 3 people offered comments for Question 10, stating how the Trusts might improve weak areas of their work. Suggestions were focussed entirely on improving **publicity** and making more contact with **schools**, including secondary schools.

In answer to Question 4, about The Wildlife Trusts' function, 27 students gave no response, possibly suggesting a deficiency in the Trusts' **publicity** of their role and function. The 16 comments that did describe the Trusts' function mostly suggested a purely **conservation role**, (10 responses). Only 6 responses included statements that expected Trusts also to be in involved in **education or awareness raising**.

Question 10 that asked for further comments or suggestions for the Trusts' work was answered by only 4 of the student sample. 3 of these responses identified weaknesses in Trusts' **educational work** and **publicity**. The 3 comments suggested that The Wildlife Trusts should:

> Have more contact with schools. Focus on secondary schools as well.
>
> Publicise and advertise to let people know about them
>
> Publicise themselves more as an organisation

The Council Community Forum sample also perceived The Wildlife Trusts' function to be principally one of **conservation**. However, 8 out of 21 people did see the Trusts to have a **broadly communicational purpose**. 1 person suggested that the Trust function is:

> ...at local level and encouraging involvement of the local community.

From the majority of forum members, who saw the Trusts as conservation-focussed, 1 respondent saw that **The Wildlife Trusts' role had changed** over time:

> To begin with it was groups of natural history 'bods' who were interested in their local sites. Now the main function should be to raise local awareness of the natural environment.

From the Community Action Forum, as for the student sample, Question 10 provided responses suggesting that The Wildlife Trusts had been **neglecting the people** side of their work, whilst over-concentrating on looking after wildlife:

> It's about time that The Wildlife Trusts put more emphasis on the education of their members and less on preserving pretty sites.

> They are not currently very successful in involving communities with their local reserves. Put more effort into this.

> The Wildlife Trusts should get more involved with Community projects, raising awareness in the community of the local habitats and wildlife and making people feel this is relevant to them.

6.3.2.3 Externally perceived weaknesses revealed by researcher's field notes.

Finally, weaknesses in educational provision were evident within the researcher's field notes. The field notes used for analysis here are the researcher's recordings made after telephone calls, notes made in preparation for visits and notes made after each visit. Weaknesses highlighted in field notes often echoed the perceptions of weaknesses that were revealed in the interviews themselves. They fell into the previously recorded categories identified in section 6.3.2.1, in particular the categories of: **management and organisation**, **attitudes** and **image** and occasionally **resources**. Information about weaknesses is presented here in the form of descriptive accounts and verbatim extracts from the researcher's field notes.

Within the **management and organisation** category, lack of communication between personnel within Trusts was prevalent among many Trusts. For example, the following field note extracts exhibit examples where educational staff involved in education were unaware of Trusts' conservation work or Trusts' overall strategies of work. There are also examples that highlight lack of communication between directors and education staff, indicating either educators' exclusion from Trust planning or directors' exclusion from education work.

These problems of a management nature overlap weaknesses reported within the attitudes category as they show how attitudes towards educational work are manifested in the Trusts' literature or day-to-day business.

In the author's following field note excerpts, all names have been replaced with discrete letters to disassociate participants from their real names, to respect the anonymity of the individual participants.

> W, as a part time Watch coordinator considers herself as the only person who is involved in education. She doesn't seem to understand the partnership or the Wildlife Trust as a national organisation. She feels that the conservation people are quite separate from her work and has no communication with them. W said she had never seen the Conservation Plan.

> The Welcome to Wildlife Officer, X, started last April and said that she would probably leave the next April. Did not talk to X in the interview, the director did not think it was appropriate as X was 'only temporary and doesn't reflect the educational work of the Trust'.

> When Y, the administrative officer, talked about the projects she continually mentioned their names but could not say who was involved in them. There were long hesitations before Y's answers. No visions or hope for the Trust. Y fears the Welsh Trusts unifying because she doesn't want to be 'tarred with the same brush as some of them'.

> The business plan for the Trust, which Z gave me, displayed education as separate from 'External Relations' work and 'Direct Action'. The proportion of expenditure on 'Education' (classified as 'education', 'Watch and training') was, I worked out, only 1.8% of the budget. Ten times more was spent on reserve management alone. The director during the interview was silent almost throughout. The education women seemed to ignore him. He carried on with his work whilst they talked.

The next set of field notes that follow highlight weaknesses that perhaps more clearly define problems of **attitude** within and across Trusts. The separation of education from other work, in the minds of some personnel interviewed, is clear. In some instances, problematic attitudes led to staff feeling isolated and unsupported in their work:

> The director, in a number of cases, kept saying he couldn't answer questions because he wasn't 'an educationalist'. He remarked, regarding the question, 'What obstacles are there...?' 'What a good question'. I've never thought of that before'. B, the new Environmental Awareness Project Officer, did seem confused about her role and talked of lack of support. C, the Watch Officer was very downhearted throughout the interview.

> The part time provider of Wild Nights Out, (the night-time outdoor experience), expressed feelings that he's not given support, congratulation or the resources he deserves. He did not know, he said, or want to know about the structure of the Trust.

> D seemed somewhat downhearted and spoke of lack of support from her director, in particular, but also from other staff in the Trust. Although much effort had been put into the centre, which was very smart, with ecologically sound building techniques. D mentioned that she thought the director almost wanted the centre to fail. The director was described as 'with' the education officer at the outset, she said, but was now happy to leave her to it.

The field notes that follow reveal more evidence about cases of some Trusts' poor public **image** – sometimes non-existent, sometimes inconsistent from Trust to Trust. Although all Trusts were successfully visited, there were a number of occasions where visits were clearly not wanted, where receptionists and other personnel were unhelpful or defensive. These are instances where the author noted that a negative Trust image was created. The researcher thought that these Trusts revealed themselves as unfriendly or unwelcoming; this would be problematic in creating the first impression of The Wildlife Trusts for members of the public. Examples follow:

> Mrs J, the receptionist, seemed to find it a real effort to tell me when the director or education officer would be available. On another date when I called, she said 'He has got your message and he is very busy you know'. On eventually contacting the director himself, he asked if I was going to visit all the Trusts. 'Why me?' he said.

> I Spoke to the director's receptionist who was determined that I should not speak to him! Was I sure I needed to speak to him? She asked 3 times, and then asked who I was, what exactly I wanted and was it urgent?

> On the telephone K, the director, asked if I needed to go all the way to X..... K said that it probably wouldn't be worth my while. He suggested he could tell me what I

needed to know over the 'phone. He sounded very unhappy at the prospect of my visit.

The education officer had mentioned - on the way to the Trust - that 2 new educational posts were to be created but the director had not told him much about them. During the interview, I mentioned these jobs. The director responded: 'Oh, I thought I offered the jobs around here'. As we went through the interview, the director became more agitated and disinterested asking how much longer the interview would take. On hearing that it would be about an hour, he said 'Bloody hell...I haven't got that time'.

The image of Trusts was also recorded within the researchers' personal notes labelled 'first impressions'. Negative images were recorded where the author found the Trust buildings to be inappropriate for receiving visitors, where the sites were poorly signposted or not signed at all. Some buildings were hidden, inaccessible, without heating or run down in need of repair. The following excerpts, that fit into a new category of **resources** illustrate some of these examples:

The centre for V Trust was in an excellent location within the National Park Authority owned visitor centre. However, there were poor directions after the first sign. Was lost for a while. The Trust offices were quite separate and by no means somewhere to visit – a very old house out on a limb. The potentially good location seems completely wasted, bearing mind the number of visitors that use the car park and visit the National Park area.

The offices of W Trust were based in a beautiful location in the grounds of the castle, although there were no signs to them. They are old offices, very cold and run down - not a place to visit.

In X Trust, 6 staff out of a total of 13 work in an enormous building, which is new and leased by Y company. The site is now a nature reserve set on an industrial estate. Though referred to, in the trustees' report (March 1998) as 'high profile venue from which to promote the Trust', it is not signposted. There are no Wildlife Trust signs or logos...There are boards and shutters on the building and evidence of crime. (The spare tyre of my car was stolen during interviews!) There's nowhere, where people could just drop in. The place felt unsafe.

6.4 The Educational Culture within The Wildlife Trusts

Report of this third aspect of The Wildlife Trusts' education is divided into three sections:

6.4.1 reports on the differing understandings of the concept of 'education' held by the large sample of Wildlife Trust personnel who were interviewed.

6.4.2 examines the opinions sought on 'ideals for education'. Wildlife Trust personnel were asked what they would do with a 'blank slate' for the organisation's provision of education.

6.4.3 explores the educational culture of The Wildlife Trusts by analysis of in-depth interviews with a sample of 12 education staff. The interviews investigated factors

influencing the development of the staff's concerns about wildlife and the environment.

6.4.1 Understandings of education

The core interviews were used in order to understand definitions of Wildlife Trust education, as understood by Trust personnel. An understanding of Trusts' interpretation of the term education was gained from responses to interview Question 4:

Question 4. What does education mean in the context of The Wildlife Trusts? Who is it aimed at? How would you wish to see it [education] defined?

The responses to Question 4 are examined here in three parts, beginning with section 6.4.1.1.

6.4.1.1 The meaning of education in The Wildlife Trusts

In answering the first part of Question 4, personnel usually stated more than 1 idea for the meaning of education. As can be seen from the list of categories below, a large proportion of Trusts gave replies that fell into a category of **raising awareness**.

1. **Raising awareness**	33 Trust responses
2. **Experiences**	25 Trust responses
3. **Empowerment**	21 Trust responses
4. **Education defined in relation to other Trust work**	18 Trust responses
5. **Knowledge and understanding**	15 Trust responses
6. **Information about Trusts' work**	9 Trust responses
7. **Lifelong learning**	7 Trust responses

Descriptions of all 7 categories are given in section 6.4.1.1.1, accompanied by selected quotes from Trust personnel on the meaning of education. Later in 6.4.1.1.2, categories of meaning are discussed according to respondent as the different views of director and educational staff are highlighted.

6.4.1.1.1 · Categories of meaning

The category **raising awareness** included responses where education means: changing attitudes, altering prejudices and creating respect for the environment; in many cases the phrase 'raising awareness' was used. 33 Trusts gave responses in this category, for example education was defined as:

> Consciousness raising. Our education work needs to be about connecting with something in the individual, giving an awareness of our origins as species and the system that supports us.

> A main aim is attitudes and changing attitudes. Education is the key way to do that.

> [Education is] raising awareness of conservation issues that wildlife and habitats face.

25 Trusts gave responses that understood education to be about **experiences** such as participation in Trusts' work, involvement and enjoyment. For 3 Trusts these experiences included:

> Getting children to look and listen and give them a fun experience up to GCSE and A' levels – looking at specific issues, not abstract ones.

> Giving enjoyable experiences – having wonderful times in outdoor environments. Intellectual understanding is not enough.

> Informal education such as holiday activities, evening talks, guided reserve walks... teacher training, wildlife gardening, Watch.

The category of **empowerment** was created to classify responses from 21 Trusts. Such responses included enthusing and inspiring for action:

> Good environmental practice is about young people and young people's needs, their abilities to operate in the future – empowerment, not restricting it to school age but giving the ability to influence decisions about the environment where they live. It's the quality of life and raising aspirations.

> Informing, so that they have understanding about wildlife and conservation to help make changes to their way of living.

An unexpected set of responses arose from 18 Trusts. These Trusts all spoke of **education defined in relation to other Trust work**. For example, responses identified: education as a process to achieve conservation aims. Other responses reported 'fuzzy' boundaries between the work of educators and other staff. Some Trusts in this category showed an unwillingness to view education as a separate entity:

> In this organisation we would like to see education as a way of doing the conservation job.

> Conservation officers cover campaigning. It's difficult to find a dividing line.

> Trying to 'pigeon-hole' education as a separate aspect of The Wildlife Trusts' work is almost impossible. Marketing, presswork and education are all part of the Trusts' work. They should be integrated and can be subdivided for purposes of planning and strategy.

The category of **knowledge and understanding** comprises responses viewing education to be primarily concerned with developing people's knowledge and understanding. Examples of quotes from 3 of the 15 Trusts which responded in this category include:

> Hopefully we shouldn't be didactic – just by laying out facts of knowledge, giving experience. Hopefully it's enjoyable and useful.

> Interpreting scientific and specialist knowledge into 'everyday terms'.

> Providing knowledge, concepts and ideals about wildlife that will hopefully make a difference.

There were 9 Trusts which defined education to mean imparting **information about Trusts' work**. Trust education included:

> Informing people about what we're doing and changing opinions and behaviour.

> Extending what is done by the Trusts into local people's thought processes.

The final category of responses was labelled lifelong learning. 7 Trusts understood education to mean 'lifelong learning'. Responses in this category included the identification of education as a process, education for all and simply use of the phrase '**lifelong learning**'.

> Education is about lifelong learning – schools, primary and some secondary, members of the public – as many people as possible...Training for NVQ's and New Deal to get people we are not normally in contact with.

> Lifelong learning should be everybody involved – education for Sustainability and involvement.

6.4.1.1.2 Categories of meaning according to respondent

For the majority of categories there were more responses from education staff, than for other personnel (in keeping with the fact that there were more education staff interviewed). There was 1 exception in that more directors (10) than educators (8) gave responses within the category of 'education defined in relation to other Trust work'. This category was different from the others in that clear definitions and meanings were not given. Instead the concept of education was described in terms how it fitted in with other aspects of the Trusts' work. This constituted the primary difference between responses from directors and those from educators.

Firstly, to illustrate the **directors' responses** the following comments from 3 directors demonstrate their views that education is part of the conservation process. They all view education as 'a means to an end, not an end in itself':

> Environmental education is not our goal, it's a means to an end. So we promote biodiversity in Yorkshire because it's good for people.

> It – education within the Conservation Plan – is not education for its own sake. It's a means to an end.

> It's a way of achieving our main objective and it's a means to an end, not an end in itself.

Secondly, the directors were keen to report that education is carried out within other departmental fields of work and by other 'non-education' staff. 1 director purported that:

> Education has so much baggage attached. Marketing and press work is education. They should be integrated.

Another director suggested that:

> There's no one who doesn't have a part to play in education, whether they know it or not.

Thirdly, in connection with the first two points, there were directors who saw education as an integral part of their whole Trusts' work and not as a separate entity:

> It's central to what we do. Education is everything and everything is education. The word education is a semantic – we ignore it and get on with it.

> What education means at National Office is quite different. In Devon it is all that is done. As soon as there is more than one person involved in something, it becomes an educational experience. That's why conservation and education are together.

Finally, several directors expressed their preference to keep themselves outside the process of defining and planning education altogether. This director wanted guidance to reach a meaning of 'education':

> I don't know what education is – it's fluffy. I want to be told.

The responses from the **education staff** were a more varied mixture of positive and negative views towards education's place in the Trusts' work. Some educators looked positively at their experiences of the lack of specifically defined education posts. This situation is illustrated here:

> Even here without formal education posts, many of the staff have done education anyway.

Others lauded the integration of education with the work of other departments:

> All individuals in the Trust pretty well do education - staff, volunteers - there are close links with marketing.

> [Education]...is not pigeonholed. There's a traditional split between conservation and education, but they need each other.

However there were responses from education officers that defined education in terms of its sometimes-problematic relations with other departments, as these comments illustrate:

> Most of the others are trying to get out of education.

It [education] is not recognised in this Trust... but just having the land looked after is not enough. That's my personal view.

Education is separate from marketing, it's using pedagogical means and it's a long term thing.

Conservation has been good at education, but they wouldn't see it as education and wouldn't like to.

6.4.1.2 Who is education aimed at?

In response to the second part of Question 4, it was clear that most Trusts considered their target audiences to comprise a wide range of groups. All Trusts except 2 made some reference to young people including 'schools' or 'children' or 'Wildlife Watch'; most Trusts also suggested that education was aimed at 'everyone'. Responses fitted into the categories shown in Figure 36; the broader categories are in bold and the smaller categories are in regular type:

Figure 36 Audiences for Trusts' Education

Category of response	Number of Trust Responses
Wide Audience	**40**
Everyone/ all ages	31
Not just schools/ children, 'more than that'	15
Communities/ community groups	13
The 'non-converted' or non experts/ those who we don't normally reach	4
Individuals	3
The 'converted' i.e. those already interested	3
All social groups, no exclusions	3
Disabled	1
Formal Education audience	**27**
School children	19
Colleges/ sixth form	7
Teachers/ trainee teachers	4
Nursery or pre-school children	1
Not schools	1
Young people	**20**
Children/ young people	11
Wildlife Watch	9
Older children/ youth	2
Uniform groups i.e. Brownies, Scouts	2
Parents through their children	2
White middle-class children	1

Category of response	Number of Trust Responses
Adults	**14**
Families (and parents)	7
Adults	4
Adults for education/ training	4
People on walks and talks (incl. Members)	3
Over 50's	1
Decision makers	**8**
'Decision makers'	6
Local Authorities	5
Businesses and organisations	4
Those with political/ governmental influence	3
Land managers	**7**
Landowners	6
Farmers	4
Land managers	2
Internal	**4**
Trust members/ staff	4

Although many Trusts perceived education to be aimed at everyone, Figure 36 on page 217 illustrates that a number of groups could be considered as lower in priority than others. These audiences include: disabled people, pre-school children, 'uniform groups', parents, over-50's and land managers, all of which are mentioned by fewer than 3 Trusts. Only a small proportion of Trusts mentioned people in the 'older children/ youth' category and no mention was made of university students in this part of the interview.

6.4.1.3 A definition of education

> Defining education – I'm not good at defining or making statements to stick to, but I can give you an example of what it is in woodlands: Look and listen, noticing wonderful things, getting children to see connections - what lives there, the whole Ecosystem. Showing by example how we affect the environment by making, using, recycling all the time...informal, fun, subtle ways (Watch officer).

The third part of Question 4 asked Trusts to state how they *would* wish to see education defined. (Ideal definitions of education for The Wildlife Trusts are also examined in 6.4.3, which deals with what Trust personnel would do with a 'blank slate' for education).

From the 46 Trusts and 1 National Office, 32 Trusts took opportunities to volunteer criticisms, problems and suggestions for future changes. Within this category labelled **criticism and change**, 4 categories could be identified a list of which follows within subsection 6.4.1.3.1. Further definitions are described in subsection 6.4.1.3.2.

6.4.1.3.1 Defining education by criticism and change

1. **Education as an unfavourable word** 14 Trust responses
2. **Education's association with Watch** 9 Trust responses
3. **The need to broaden educational work** 6 Trust responses
4. **Problems associated with broadening education.** 3 Trust responses

The first category does not so much define education as criticise the Trusts' understanding of education; there were 14 Trusts responding within this category that found 'education' to be an unhelpful word. It was usually the directors who referred to **education as an unfavourable word**, though 1 Watch officer did say that she preferred:

> ...not to use the 'education' word. Raising awareness - that's what education is defined as by education people. It should take on another name because it's interpreted as schools only.

1 director stated that he hated the word 'education' and would be happy to lose it altogether. The following directors' comments are in agreement:

> There's a hang up – the purpose of education? We said earlier it's about getting towards inspiration, but 'education' is about knowledge and skills, it's not inspiration with education.

> I'd rather move away from 'education' completely, it has so much baggage attached, especially with older staff and with National Office. To some extent it [education] has been Natural History through the Watch scheme. I'd rather have a broader view, to start with - heightening awareness.

The second category concerns 9 Trusts' problems with **education's association with Wildlife Watch**. In particular, education was thought to need broadening and moving away from its close associations with Watch. 3 directors here make comments about Watch, in their discussions about defining education:

> Watch has a poor reputation.

> Education is not Watch here as it is nationally. It's schools and wider. Adults and children are not reflected nationally. [Education] should also be for teenagers and families.

> Many Trusts are dealing with only schools or Watch. Watch is not broad enough really. Other people do education under 'reserves' too. But education becomes isolated with Watch. We should be getting away from the narrow job title.

The third category refers to 6 Trusts' responses highlighting **a need to broaden The Wildlife Trusts' educational work**. Examples are presented in the following comments from 1 director and 2 education managers, respectively:

> We need to highlight opportunities for all staff to do education, all staff and volunteers.

> Our future lies I think in broadening into community work, NVQ's and addressing unemployment.

> What we do and what we like to do are different. There should be more community and specific groups we tackle for example agriculture, the elderly and disabled.

For 3 Trusts, historical development and traditional views were highlighted as **problems associated with broadening education** within the Trusts' work. Comments from educators and directors alike illustrate that attitudes towards education within the Trust present problems with broadening the Trusts' educational remit.

> Education should be for everyone – different ages, cultures, backgrounds... but particular groups are targeted because of limited resources.

> Education should be reaching the people we don't normally reach but it cannot be all things to all people.

> Education is as broad as you can make it...it's all things to all people but the education person cannot achieve it all.

6.4.1.3.2 Further definitions

In addition to responses that defined education by criticism or suggestion for change, there were responses from 15 Trusts which simply gave the definitions of education that they would like to see in use. Personnel often gave multiple responses and hence a variety of definitions.

7 out of 15 Trusts wished to see education defined in ways that fell into a **raising awareness** category. 6 responses were placed within a category titled **policy** definitions. These 6 Trusts appeared to be happy with their existing definitions of education. This was illustrated by their efforts to refer the interviewer to existing education policies or Trust mission statements. Some examples follow that present definitions found within these working documents:

> Through its education work, Staffordshire Wildlife Trust will seek to give people a greater knowledge of biodiversity in the county, raise awareness of human pressures on wildlife and habitat and encourage a more positive and caring attitude towards the environment (Staffordshire Wildlife Trust – A Strategy for Environmental Education).

> The purpose of the education department is to promote environmental education, in keeping with the overall habitats and species diversity aim of the Trusts, throughout the county, and encompassing all ages and abilities. This will include giving professional education advice, developing resources, helping and training volunteers

> and promoting productive co-operation with partners in the public, private and voluntary sectors in educational matters. This work will also help raise the profile of the Trust, but profile raising will not be its primary aim. (Yorkshire Wildlife Trust Strategic Statements).

> The aim of the Sussex Wildlife Trust is to use its knowledge and expertise to help the people and organisations of Sussex to enjoy, understand and take action to conserve Sussex wildlife and its habitats (Vision for the Wildlife of Sussex).

5 Trusts' responses fell within the **empowerment** category. 4 Trusts wished to define education within the category of **knowledge and understanding**.

Most definitions fitted into categories previously devised for the first part of Question 4 i.e. what does education mean in the context of The Wildlife Trusts? However, a new category of definition was created for responses to this, the third part of Question 4. There were 2 Trusts which wished to see education defined in terms of targeting a *variety* of audiences. Within this new category labelled **audience diversity** Trusts defined education as:

> Talking to as many different audiences as possible, creating an awareness leading to knowledge and understanding and then the power to do something.

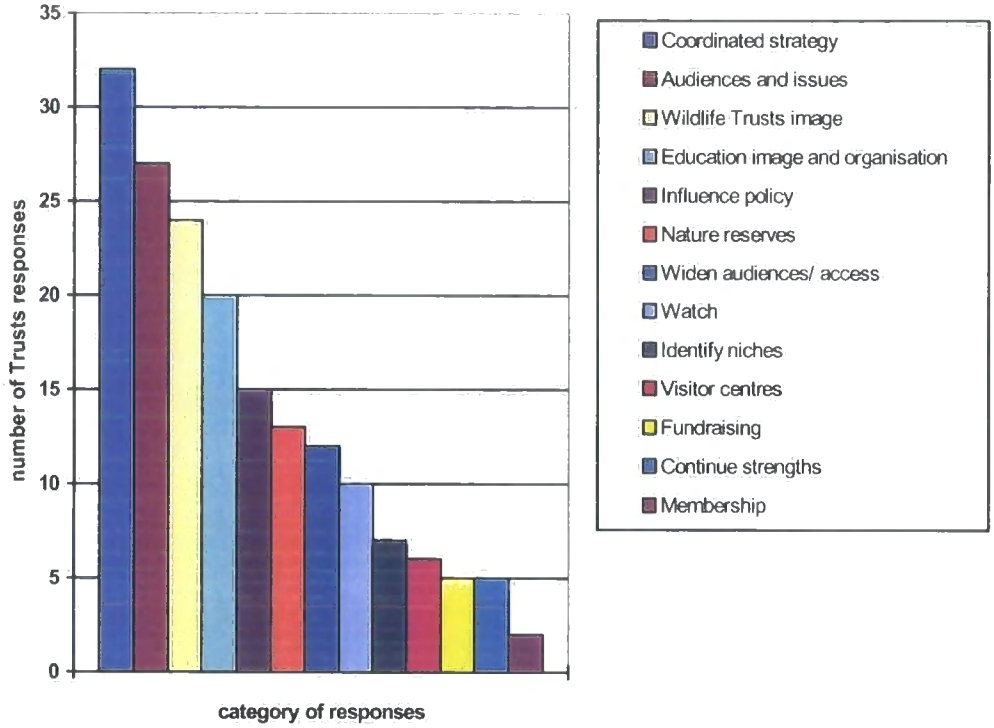
> Putting key messages in conservation to a variety of target audiences in a variety of ways.

Section 6.4.1 has considered Trust 'education', as defined by the staff who deliver it and other Trust personnel. In particular, education had been defined through criticism and desire for change. Section 6.4.1 has illustrated differences between directors' and educators' definitions of education. The next element of this section deals with some hopes and ideals for the delivery of education.

6.4.2 Ideals for education

Figure 37 that follows on page 222 summarises the categories of response to Question 24 which asked what the Trusts should do or could do if they were given a 'blank slate' for education. As an addendum to Question 24, personnel were also asked whether they wished for stronger national coordination or none at all. People responded to these combined questions with either suggestions for change of strategy and management technique or suggestions for particular issues or audiences on which educational work could focus. Figure 37 summarises the responses and is followed by description of each category of response.

Figure 37 Suggestions for 'ideal' education



6.4.2.1 Coordinated strategy

The most frequently cited 'ideal education' was concerned with coordinated strategy; Trust personnel felt that education should receive stronger national or central coordination. 32 Trusts offered responses in this category, yet answers usually included a caveat that *coordination* should take place, not control; Trusts expressed the need to be able to add to or offer interpretation on any national strategy proposed by National Office. Examples of the nature of such **coordinated strategy** included:

- Enabling best practice to be shared, avoiding of duplication of effort
- Provision of standardised events and educational material
- Devising an educational policy or strategy
- Generating greater leadership for education
- Enabling central funding and fundraising capacity
- Creating a stronger national 'voice' for education
- Coordination of educational resources
- Systems for better inter-Trust communication
- Provision of training
- A 'one body' approach that united individual Trusts' work
- Separating National Office from RSNC
- Removing existing education staff from National Office
- Reducing democracy in decision-making
- Creating a team of people dedicated to making biodiversity relevant to people

6.4.2.2 Audiences and issues

The second category of educational ideals is **audiences and issues**. This category comprises views from 27 Trusts and is encapsulated in the notion that ideal Wildlife Trust education should involve a wide variety of audiences and issues. The individual responses in this category are presented in Figure 38:

Figure 38 Suggestions for 'ideal' audiences and issues

Suggestions for Audiences and issues	Personnel responses
Schools	9
Youth/ teens/ undergraduate	7
More people work, (including families and one-to-one contact)	5
Children, (including offering wildlife experiences and 'country side skills)	5
Community groups	4
Urban groups, (including city farms)	3
Farmers/ agricultural issues	2
Businesses, (including provision of 'green audits')	3
Planning issues	1
Development of information technology	1
Work with pre-school children	1
Welsh initiatives	1
Lobbying	1
Wetland issues	1
Housing issues	1
Provision of environmentally sound transport for centre/reserve users	1

As Figure 38 displays, there was great variation amongst the ideas for educational work. Yet it can be seen that schools, children and young people are generally considered to be the most favourable targets for education. Responses that mentioned schools as a target audience included reference to specific schools work: conducting school trips; creating and maintaining regular school contacts; publicising school work, creating school wildlife areas. In addition, 1 director did suggest that less school work should be undertaken.

6.4.2.3 Wildlife Trust image

The third category of response is termed **Wildlife Trust image**. The responses in this category were presented by 24 Trusts which all agreed that a 'blank slate' for education would require raising The Wildlife Trusts' public profile and improving its image. Some responses were restricted to the necessity for this change, while others suggested practical ways of achieving this. 2 Trusts indicated that they would be happier for The Wildlife Trusts to have less of a 'naturalists club' image, as this education officer suggested:

> If there was any way to prevent the 'expert' and 'stand-offishness', that would be good.

5 members of staff spoke of the RSPB and Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust, reporting that the Trusts should aim to become as well known as these organisations or even merge with them. 1 marketing officer commented:

> People listen to the RSPB; we could have that reputation.

Grand-scale events, campaigns and media publicity were suggested. Improvements to Trust sites, road-signage and general site promotion were also mentioned. 1 director hoped for Wildlife Trust offices to be present in every town high street. As with the issue of central coordination, there was some concern that to raise The Wildlife Trusts' profile, care should be taken not to lose local Trusts' identities. This conservation officer's comment below illustrates:

> Raising National Profile, yes, but not at the expense of losing a strong local identity. We should focus on what we do well. Let's make our niche much better.

6.4.2.4 Education image and organisation

There were 20 Trusts which believed that a blank slate would involve changes not only to The Wildlife Trusts' partnership image, but also to **education's image and organisation** in The Wildlife Trusts. As echoed in other areas of the interviews, responses reported a need for changed attitudes towards education within the Trusts. Suggestions for change included making education 'stronger', 'more balanced with conservation' and giving it a higher profile, for example a place in Wildlife Trust conference agenda.

There were also suggestions for re-organisation of staffing within education. 6 Trusts thought that creating more educational posts would be helpful. 1 person suggested the need for a paid education officer in each Trust. 2 education managers pointed out the need for better salaries to attract and maintain good staff in educational posts. Another education officer hoped for greater continuity in staffing, through the creation of more long-term posts. Comments from 2 education managers characterise a perceived need for educational posts at senior or managerial level:

> I feel the only way I got into the stride of things was by being on the senior team. With places where education is not taken seriously, they get disillusioned and staff move on, losing the career structure. There is, at present, a feeling that all directors and managers are conservation specialists.

> All Trusts could have an education manager – similar to me... developing an education department. So education would be recognised as a core function. Educational strategy needs to do this.

2 members of staff suggested that altering the place of education, within the Trusts' Conservation Plan, would improve the image of the Trusts' education. These suggestions came from a director in the first instance and an education manager in the second:

> What are the educational needs through all the Conservation Plan? What we want is recommendation as to how things can go through the whole Conservation Plan.

> The status of education is a problem. If it were written into the Trust movement, as it is with Agenda 21, we wouldn't have a problem. I haven't come across a Trust education person who doesn't feel a 'tag on'.

6.4.2.5 Influence policy

15 Trusts believed that work influencing **policy** is ideal education work. Of these Trusts, 7 Trusts viewed this to mean campaigning for changes to the UK schools' National Curriculum so that it would include more environmental education. The following statement is from 1 director who placed educational campaigning at the top of his 'blank slate' list.

> We have a role to campaign and influence government on education. Education is very close to the hearts of the public. We could campaign on a national basis.

Other suggestions for altering policy included educating government ministers and local government personnel. Frequently it was just 'policy work' that was mentioned as part of a list of goals.

6.4.2.6 Nature Reserves

Nature reserves were mentioned as a particular focus for work. Responses from 13 Trusts fitted into this category. 2 of the 13 Trusts made no mention of using reserves for education work. Instead, their directors stated that part of their 'blank slate' would include owning as many reserves as possible. 5 Trusts specifically stated that greater access to reserves was desired and another 3 Trusts highlighted that encouraging more involvement between people and reserves was important. 1 of these Trusts' directors looked positively at the potential use of his Trust's reserves for education:

> Sites could be high profile, excellent educational resources, accessible for school trips... really good schools' educational resources and family places at weekends.

Another 3 Trusts referred to a need for more education to take place on reserves. 1 Trust education officer indicated this in conjunction with a hope for increased use of centres. In another Trust, it was suggested that education staff should be posted on *each* reserve. This education manager pointed to the importance of:

> ...commitment to *making use* of nature reserves – providing opportunities for people to realise the importance of nature, to see that nature is of value. Bring them in rather than exclude them. People are essential.

6.4.2.7 Widening audiences/ access

Within the category of **widening audiences/ access**, 12 Trust personnel reflected on hopes to reach a broader set of people; some of the rural Trusts wished to work with more urban communities. The issue of enabling The Wildlife Trusts' work to be more accessible was, for this educational manager, concerned with offering wildlife experiences for all:

> ...Give everybody in the country one off, real experiences about wildlife and conservation so they would remember it and see how relevant other environmental issues are, so they feel it's accessible.

For 1 voluntary education officer, widening accessibility meant offering experiences for people who are often excluded from the Trusts' usual work. He commented:

> I would like staff of sufficient time and imagination to introduce to disabled children, children with learning difficulties, ethnic minorities and children of adverse circumstances the beauty of the environment.

Education was sometimes considered to impact upon too many people who were labelled as already 'converted' to an understanding and appreciation of wildlife. Ideally, reaching wider audiences would include, for 1 Watch officer:

> ...getting to people who don't normally care, we aren't doing this.

6.4.2.8 Watch

10 Trusts gave a variety of responses concerned with alterations to the children's club **Wildlife Watch**. Education staff, directors and others suggested integrating Wildlife Watch with school work. This would involve organising training events for coordinators, using more money on Watch promotion and increasing dissemination of ideas for Watch development. Only 1 Trust - the director - stated that he was keen to have less Watch work and more varied education being developed at the central office. 3 Trusts wished to integrate Watch into individual Trust work rather than deliver it as an educational product, separate from the rest of education. Alteration to Watch was, for this education manager, a matter of taking steps to re-assess its use and purpose:

> I'd like Watch to be the vehicle we think it could be... we need to be clear about what it's for and how to use it.

National Office staff, responsible for Wildlife Watch at a national level, expressed strong views on Watch as an important part of education. They believed that a blank slate should include developing Watch so as to fit it into the needs of local communities:

> I'd want a Watch organisation paid for for every Trust

> My advice is – your Watch network is there. It works. Know your population and their needs. Don't assume the next step is schools. Research into your own community.

6.4.2.9 Identifying Niches

The need for research into **niches** of The Wildlife Trusts' successful educational work was suggested by 7 Trusts. Personnel referred to the need for some form of market research and this director spoke of reasons for doing so:

> From Tower Hamlets to Chelsea – how do we approach them? It's not impossible... it's worth finding out how to get to each, with the need to tailor to each audience.

Almost always, views in this category came from directors or managerial education staff. They highlighted the need to identify the most effective area of educational work, the gaps in markets and the need to avoid duplication of effort. For 1 director this concept meant using education in a more political fashion; he wished to:

> ...identify very specifically the people whose actions and influence have impact - good and bad. The kids are not the ones who vote.

Another director was keen to research into the education delivered by his own Trust's education centre. He believed in looking at the demand for the centre, to 'make it competitive' and then investing appropriately.

6.4.2.10 Visitor or education centres

Where ideal views of education fitted into the **visitor or education centre** category, they were from a relatively small number of Trusts (6). The 6 Trusts all considered visitor centres in a positive light and either wished to establish or develop their own centres. 2 Trust education managers wished, on a Wildlife Trust wide scale, to see centres for every Trust:

> Each group would have a flagship reserve with purpose built green, sustainable visitor centres with officers attached. They would be linked across all the groups.

> I'm keen for every county to have at least one Wildlife Trust run and managed centre where people would find out about the threats or what they could do for the environment. It would be accessible.

The strategic planning of centre-use could, as was proposed by 1 director, be a focus of a national education programme:

> Trusts with visitor type facilities could create national strategy to promote them, (i.e. Suffolk, Norfolk) – a national programme to illustrate key places to go and national events to run. There would be big fundraising, a national wildlife fair going around the country with the Wildlife Trust logo...it's not marketing, it's an educational opportunity with practical examples of how things are done.

6.4.2.11 Fundraising

The category of **fundraising** comprised 5 Trusts' statements requesting large fundraising efforts for education. 1 person suggested that fundraising for education should be on a similarly large scale to that which took place for National Lottery nature reserve funding. The need for 'specialist fundraisers' for particular areas of education was also mentioned.

6.4.2.12 Continuing Strengths

The penultimate category of 'continuing strengths' comprises 5 Trusts' responses suggesting continuation of what was considered to work well. Details of 'strengths' were not usually given; 1 education manager did suggest that having a large team of people was a positive aspect of her Trust's education:

> [We should]...carry on what we are doing. I feel that we are successful in what we're doing. Continue that - we are one of the biggest teams in the Trusts.

6.4.2.13 Membership

Of the 2 Trusts which wished to see changes to **membership**, 1 proposed that Wildlife Trust membership should be more clearly defined. The other response suggested that Wildlife Trust membership should be organised through a central database but accessible from each individual Trust.

Section 6.4.2 has addressed The Wildlife Trusts' educational culture by reporting hopes and ideals for the delivery of education, if Trust personnel were to have a 'blank slate' for their education work. The third and final major section of 6.4 examines educational culture as reflected by the influences and experiences of Wildlife Trust education staff.

6.4.3 Influences and experiences affecting the environmental concern of education staff

> ...all this wonderful nature and I was surrounded by it....so that sort of got inside me and I am just trying to give some of it back and pass some of that richness on to other people, especially to children (education Officer E6).

This part of Chapter 6 presents the findings from the taped and transcribed interviews with 12 of the Trusts' education personnel. The interviews sought to understand how the culture of The Wildlife Trusts' education is influenced by and may be characterised by Trust educational staff, in particular their experiences of and concerns about wildlife and the environment. 6.4.3 is organised as the interviews and self-administered questionnaires themselves were organised. One sample transcribed interview may be found in Appendix E on page 315. Here follows a guide to section 6.4.3:

6.4.3.1 Staff biographical details and background

Staff ages
Job description
Previous occupations
Personal educational background
Rural/urban place of residency
Current engagement in 'environmental activities'

6.4.3.2 How staff came to their positions within The Wildlife Trusts

6.4.3.3 The nature of the sample's concern about wildlife

What it means to be concerned about wildlife
Issues which are thought to affect the UK's wildlife

6.4.3.4 Influences upon staff's concern

Memorable life experiences,
The influence of The Wildlife Trusts
The influence of other NGOs
The influence of formal education

6.4.3.1 Biographic details

Staff ages

The 12 education staff were found to be fairly evenly spread across three age ranges: 4 persons in the 20-30 years age group, 5 in the 31–40 years age group and 3 in the 41–50 years age group.

Job description

The staff were asked to state their job titles. The range of descriptions was notable, as evident in Figure 39 that follows. There was consistency in that the majority (8 out of 12) included something 'educational' in their titles, such as 'environmental teacher', 'environmental education officer' or 'education manager'. 2 people defined themselves with the word 'awareness' in their description. 3 people defined their posts with a non-educational title, as displayed in the last 3 rows of Figure 39. The names of all staff have been changed and replaced with E1, E2, E3 etc.

Figure 39 Job titles for sample of 12 education staff

NAME	TITLE OF POST
E1	'environmental education officer.'
E2	'environmental teacher to school groups on day visits.'
E3	'environmental education officer for two and a half days, story telling with theatrical interpretation... green tourism officer.'
E4	'education officer for a Wildlife Trust.''
E5	'education officer for a Wildlife Trust.'
E6	'education manager, (depends), for a Wildlife Trust / environmental organisation. Some I don't tell.'
E7	'education officer – a teacher in an environmental education centre usually.'
E8	'education and publicity officer – all aspects of raising awareness regarding wildlife issues.'
E9	'environmental awareness project officer.'
E10	'I work with the BBONT[15] conservation project.'
E11	'I work for a wildlife charity.'
E12	'centre manager / nature conservation officer.'

Previous occupation

There were distinct patterns in the occupations held by staff before employment in The Wildlife Trusts. The staff as a whole detailed 29 different jobs, up to 6 per person within the categories shown in Figure 40 on page 230:

[15] Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Nature Trust now named BBOWT.

Figure 40 Previous occupations of education staff

Previous occupations	Number of responses
Various	10
Environmental employment	6
Education	6
Environment and education	5
No previous occupation	1

The **various** category describes different part-time occupations that do not easily fit into other categories. However, a couple of these occupations could be considered to be linked in some way to other categories, for example the posts of 'field studies domestic assistant' and 'Trust researcher' may have involved conservation and/or education work, but these links were not explicitly stated. Other occupations reported and placed in the 'various' category were: factory work, painting, acting, clerical work, bar work, book selling and 'others'.

The category of **environmental employment** includes the following: conservation work, outdoor work and work with animals, (paid and voluntary). Sample occupations were: ranger posts, work with the RSPB, work for local authorities as recycling officer or conservation officer and volunteering for BTCV.

Within the **education** category, 6 people reported teaching and training occupations as well as other work with children. There may have been an environmental aspect to these roles but they were not specified. There were 4 staff who had been teachers, (1 had been both a secondary and primary teacher; another just secondary; 1 had been a part time college teacher and the fourth simply quoted 'teacher'). 2 staff had worked with children, 1 as a nanny and the other as a playgroup course tutor.

The jobs of the 6 who specified past occupations in **environment and education** combined the previous 'environmental employment' and 'education' categories. For example 1 woman, who had been a riding school assistant combined outdoor horse work with work of an instructional /educational nature by giving riding lessons. The other environmental roles are perhaps more clearly linked with aspects of awareness raising: recycling project officer for a local authority; project officer for an environmental charity called 'Landlife'; field studies tutor; conservation volunteer coordinator.

The **no previous occupation** category contained only 1 response from someone who stated that her job in The Wildlife Trusts had been her only occupation.

Personal educational background

There was identifiable consistency amongst the group. All staff were qualified up to A' level. Only 1 person's education was limited to A' level with a vocational qualification. The remaining 11 all held University degrees. Those who specified the subject of their degrees reported that they were in the following areas: Biology, Zoology, Environmental Policy and Countryside Planning, Environmental Science. 3 people also held Master's Degrees, all in environmental areas of study. 10 out of 12 held vocational or professional qualifications in at least 1 of the subjects listed in Figure 41 that follows.

Figure 41 Vocational/ professional qualifications of education staff

Area of Qualification	Number of Responses
Environmental/ Educational Diplomas	4
Chainsaw use	2
Drama therapy	1
Management	1
Teaching English as a Foreign Language	1
NVQ assessment	1
First Aid	1

Rural/urban place of residency

Staff were asked to state both where they had grown up and where they currently live. The biographical questionnaire offered choices of response in categories of 'urban', 'suburban' or 'rural'. Only 1 person had grown up in an urban area, 6 in suburban and 5 in rural areas. In terms of present living locations, the sample was distributed almost equally in the urban, suburban and rural areas.

Current engagement in 'environmental activities'

The biographical data questions, asked through a self-administered questionnaire, requested staff to identify from a list of 'environmental' activities in which they regularly engaged. Results are shown in Figure 42 below. The full sample's participation in reading about wildlife matters, outdoor activities and recycling is most noticeable, as is the fact that only 2 people are regular lobbyists.

Figure 42 Environmental activities undertaken by education staff

ACTIVITY	NUMBER OF PEOPLE (n=12)
Reading about wildlife matters	12
Recycling	12
Outdoor activities	12
Buying 'environmental friendly' products	11
Membership of wildlife organisations	9
Teaching environmental courses	9
Energy conservation	9
'Environmentally friendly' transport use	9
Attending environmental education Courses	8
Practical conservation	8
Lobbying local/national government on wildlife	2

During interview, staff responded to the self-administered questionnaire by ticking boxes and pre-created categories therefore there were few additional details offered

about the activities. However, additional information on staff's activities can be summarised as follows:

- No one attended or taught environmental courses in their spare time. Any involvement was through Wildlife Trust paid employment.
- 4 people were variously members of the following NGOs: their own Trust, a butterfly conservation organisation, WWF and the British Herpetological Society.
- Outdoor activities mentioned included those in Figure 43.

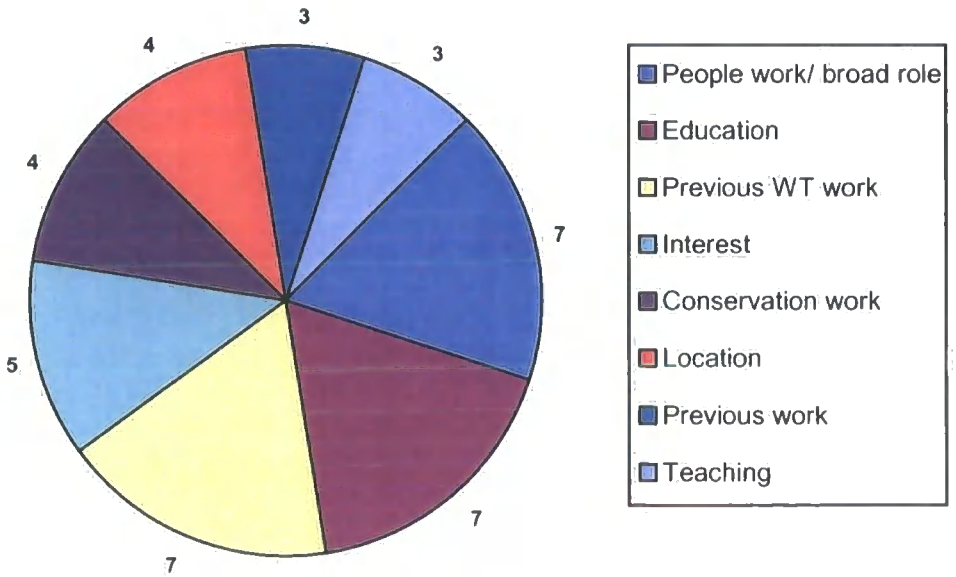
Figure 43 Outdoor activities of education staff

Outdoor activity	Number of responses
Walking	8
Camping/ backpacking	2
Football	1
Canoeing	1
Scuba diving	1
Horse riding	1

6.4.3.2 How staff came to their positions within The Wildlife Trusts

During interview each educator was asked: 'Can you tell me how you came to work in this role in The Wildlife Trusts?' Staff usually gave 1 or 2 reasons. The whole sample of 12 people offered 40 responses to this question and these were placed into the following categories of response shown in Figure 44 below along with the number of responses in each category:

Figure 44 Education staff's reasons for current roles in The Wildlife Trusts



People work / broad role

7 Staff reported that they had wanted a job enabling them to work with people, in a broad or educational role or a role that entailed communication. Responses gave evidence of staff interest in linking conservation and education or, as 1 person suggested, having the 'opportunity of joining all these strands of work together'. This sentiment is apparent in the following explanations from 2 members of staff:

> ... so it killed two birds with one stone by getting involved with the teaching side and using my training but also on the academic side using some of the knowledge I had of the environment (E2).

> So basically having pursued a training in theatre, I put that together with my personal passion for the outdoors and the natural world (E3).

Education

7 staff recalled their educational backgrounds when considering what prompted them to work for The Wildlife Trusts. Only higher education and vocational training were quoted as an influence on job choices:

> I did an Environmental Policy degree with Countryside Planning and I was eager to stay in that field (E9).

> I went on to study Geography at a polytechnic which was very academic, not at all vocational and it didn't really cover what I wanted to know about – that was the management of the countryside practically. So I transferred to a Diploma in Countryside Management at a nearby agricultural college. So that sort of switched me on to the nature conservation aspect of things (E12).

Previous Wildlife Trust Work

7 staff reported previous experience in paid employment or as a volunteer for The Wildlife Trusts. In this category, 1 person described working for a community service programme whose brief it was to 'raise awareness in The Wildlife Trusts and also look for sponsorship opportunity'. For this reason she came into contact with the Trusts' work, later working for the Trusts. 5 of the 7 staff came to The Wildlife Trusts as volunteers first before applying for advertised paid posts. The voluntary work opened up further opportunities, as these staff reported:

> It [the job] was advertised in the local paper. I also knew that it was coming up because I was in contact with the Wildlife Trust and worked for the Wildlife Trust for short spells before (E8).

> I had been working with the Trust as a volunteer for a while and then this job came up and I got it (E5).

1 person's previous involvement with the Trusts was as a Wildlife Watch leader. Whilst working for another environmental organisation, he used to run his local Watch club.

Interest

Within this category, 5 staff reported choosing current occupations due to existing interest in wildlife, the countryside or outdoors. 2 people mentioned passion for the outdoors and the natural world: 1 explained that she had always had a 'lifelong passion for the natural environment'. 1 person's combined passion for the outdoors and theatrical work drew him to his Wildlife Trust job. 2 members of staff reported that they had developed an interest in the outdoors, nature and wildlife when they were very young. The comment from this person highlighted his interest as a major catalyst for career choice:

> It was interest in wildlife, I'd say, which ultimately led me to a career in wildlife and eventually the reason I went for this particular job was that the role that I found I could do was the awareness raising rather than the research (E8).

Conservation work

4 staff specifically wanted to work in conservation, the countryside or a job in a biological field. For example these 2 educators explained:

> When I was in secondary school I really wanted to work in some aspect of the countryside (E12).

> I have worked with people as a volunteer, so I actually wanted to work in the conservation field and I have done a degree in Environmental Biology (E11)

Location

The 'location' category received 4 responses. Of these 4 people, who found themselves in The Wildlife Trusts because they wanted to live and/or work in a particular area, 2 mentioned a desire to work in an urban area:

> I think I was quite keen to work in an urban area as well – in an urban context and in the urban environment (E7).

> I knew [this city] already so, um, and then I guess I am going to stay here because I think working in urban conservation is really important (E1).

Another person explained that she applied for her job because she wanted to stay in her local area; she was proud of it and wished to work in environmental education in a place she knew well. The fourth person in this category stated that her family's move to a new area meant that she took a voluntary position to satisfy her wildlife interest.

Previous work

Previous work in similar fields elsewhere had been partly influential for 3 people. The previous roles were reported as: community programme work involving 'wardening' and education, a job with a local authority and work with another conservation organisation.

Teaching

Previous experiences in teaching helped lead 3 members of staff to work in their Wildlife Trust jobs. 1 person explained:

> ...I suppose it has fitted in with my past career, because I used to teach and didn't want to go back to full time teaching (E2).

6.4.3.3 The nature of the sample's concern about wildlife

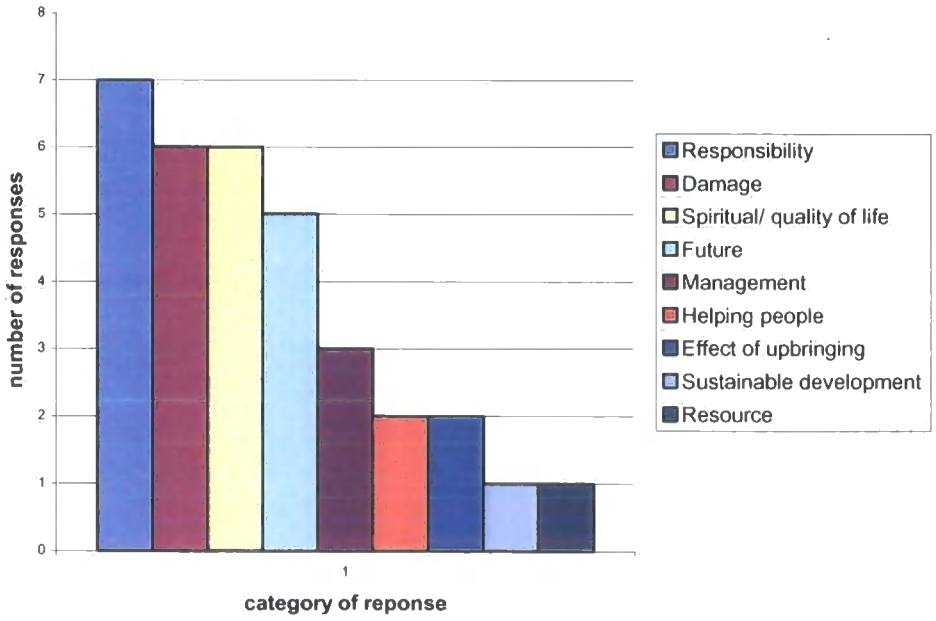
6.4.3.3.1 What it means to be concerned about wildlife

The 12 Wildlife Trust staff reported their understanding, beliefs and views in answer to the interview question: 'What do you think it means to be concerned about wildlife?' Often, answers were not solely related to wildlife but spilled over into concepts of 'nature', 'environment' and 'ecosystems', as explicitly stated here by this member of staff:

> I suppose I tend not to think of it in terms of wildlife. I tend to think in terms of environment I suppose and environmental issues of which wildlife conservation is obviously one. Um, and I suppose I tend to think in terms of, you know, more an ecosystems approach to things in the sense of thinking you know, the cycles and materials, energy flow – those sort of ecological concepts. That tends to be that kind of broad more holistic approach in the way I kind of think about things (E7).

The union of wildlife, nature, environment and ecosystems was viewed by the author to be a *way of talking about* concern, rather than a category of concern. The full list of categories of answer and frequencies of response (33 in total) are presented in Figure 45 that follows:

Figure 45 The nature of education staff's concern for wildlife



The three most frequent categories of answer, (receiving 7, 6 and 6 responses respectively), were defined as **responsibility**, **damage** and what has been classified as a **spiritual or quality of life** based concern. There follows the details of these 3 and the remaining 6 categories.

Responsibility

This category included views of wildlife in moral terms and in terms of respect or responsibility for other species. Some staff mentioned sharing the earth with other species or the need for stewardship. Statements like these three are characteristic:

> I think that it's a moral issue, it's a sense of responsibility (E9).

> ...we're not the only species on the planet are we?...it's important to preserve it for, I guess, all the other species who have got as much right to be here as we have. So we ought to look after it really (E1).

> I think that you have a sort of respect for the rest of creation as it were, and humankind is just one aspect of biodiversity so I feel that we have a sort of responsibility of stewardship towards the rest of life on earth (E10).

Damage

The 6 responses within the **damage** category addressed concern about harmful impact upon the environment and included views about particular instances of damage or extinction. Comments from these two members of staff refer firstly, to the need to address human-induced damage and secondly, to thoughts on extinction:

> ...we should do our bit to ensure we don't damage it...the rest of life on earth... unnecessarily (E10).

> Well, I suppose – it's recognition of the fact that wildlife is disappearing and areas of habitat and actual species. I just have the feeling that it is something worth saving (E8).

Another person expressed great concern about the harmful changes humans are causing. In the comment below, her feelings about the future can also be identified as part of her concern:

> I'm concerned about the fact that man seems to think it has got the right to change the world without thinking of the consequences, and that we are not taking enough long term view and I think for what's going to happen in the next hundred years because we have changed it so much in the last hundred years. I think that it's really worrying too, that that if we don't curb our way of life and be so greedy, other life forms shouldn't fall by – you know, the fact that we are dominating them (E2).

Spiritual significance or quality of life

The category defined as **spiritual significance or quality of life** contains responses that made spiritual links between humans and the rest of the natural world. Responses of this type are characterised here:

> ...I feel that the natural world is a context for supreme learning and living. It's regenerative, restorative, rejuvenative and, ultimately, has offered me the ability to fulfil my potential. Aspects like spiritual fulfilment are locked in relationship to the living, waking, and more than human, sensuous world of nature (E3).

> It...wildlife...is fundamental to my life. I have to be concerned about it...It's spiritually tied in with existence on the planet. I wouldn't want to see us divorced from our roots – we are part of an ecological community (E4).

The first of the responses that follows also alludes to this kind of concern for wildlife. It involves strong personal, or perhaps spiritual, feelings about nature. The response also makes reference to nature's ability to increase human quality of life. In the second of the two statements, an inherent interest in wildlife is expressed, again with a view that nature has a way of improving life:

> Well, from personal experience, there is something about being around nature and wildlife and I felt it very strongly. It's not a kind of evangelical experience but it just makes you feel a bit better because I think it reminds you of worlds outside your own little one ... in some way I think I am helping people to have a slightly better quality of life (E11).

> Well I think that wildlife is valuable in a number of ways really. The first is it's something of interest; it's intrinsically interesting and secondly something which adds to the quality of your life – just the fact that you learn that these species and habitats are out there and the fact that they are part of your surroundings. You know, they make for a much healthier environment (E8).

Future

5 staff – all women – expressed their concern for wildlife in terms of the **future**. Often their comments took a similar moral tone to those in the first category; the women reported their feelings of responsibility for the environment and a sense of saving it for future generations. Responses included a need to pass on knowledge or experience to children as in this statement:

> I've had the privilege of living in a beautiful environment as a child and growing up in a beautiful environment as a child and I feel that we should be looking after that environment and passing it on to our children to enjoy and appreciate (E12).

1 person made specific reference to concern for her own children's enjoyment of wildlife in the future:

> It's about the future...I suppose, for my children, I don't want them to become totally materialistic. I want the people in the future to be able to enjoy the wonders of the world (E2).

Management

Within the **management** category 1 person, who considered the need to 'manage' the environment or take action, stated that he was not the sort of person who disagreed with human interference. He believed that management of the environment was necessary because although some things would lose out, others would gain. Another member of staff saw herself as responsible for damaging the

environment and therefore someone who should take action to protect the environment; she reported:

> And we can all do our own bit, we can all do something towards managing the environment – you know. It can just be something small, you know just converting your own back garden into a wildlife garden or you can be doing something at school in the school grounds and just generally, the way you live your life... doing things that have a minimum impact upon the environment (E12).

Helping people

The opening quotation of section 6.4.3 is an example which lies in the **helping people** category. This importance of helping people to appreciate the natural world is reflected in the quote below. It comes from a member of staff who viewed his own concern for wildlife to be a matter of helping other people to experience similar pleasures:

> ...all this wonderful nature and I was surrounded by it...so that sort of got inside me and I am just trying to give some of it back and pass some of that richness on to other people, especially to children (E6).

1 woman's primary concern for wildlife was encapsulated in the view that working within a wildlife-related job could help people. She began her answer to the interview question with:

> Basically it means that when you go home at night and you think what you did during the day, even though it sounds like you haven't done anything useful...I actually feel that I've done something which is going to help people in some way – and the wildlife as well but it's actually the people I'm more concerned about (E11).

Effect of Upbringing

Within this category, 2 people reported that their upbringings had been influential upon their views of wildlife. For 1 person, growing up in 'an incredibly rich area for wildlife' was important in developing his concern. The other respondent felt herself privileged to live in a 'beautiful environment' as a child.

Sustainable Development

1 member of staff reported his concern for wildlife within a category defined as 'Sustainable Development'. This person, who expressed his concern as part of his 'broad and holistic' approach, also reported his concern in terms of how environment and development relate to each other:

> I've also had a very strong interest in looking at how environment and development relate to each other and the whole notion of Sustainable Development and so my ideas and approach has broadened even further (E7).

Resources

The final category which addresses staff's ideas about wildlife concern is 'resources'. The 1 person who described wildlife as an important resource, talked of it as a resource for other species as well source of recreation for people:

> I just think that it's an important resource and we're not the only species on the planet are we? So it's important to preserve it for all the other species I guess, who have got as much right to be here...And it's useful – where would we be without trees or whatever...for useful reasons as well. I mean we can climb trees can't we? They're nice to look at and we can play in the woods so, as well as whatever principles lie behind it, it's nice isn't it to go out in the countryside? (E1).

6.4.3.3.2 Issues that affect the UK's wildlife.

The education staff were asked to give consideration to what particular issues affect UK wildlife. 7 categories of response derived from analysis of their views. Overall, the most common category of response was that of **people's ignorance**. Lacks of appreciation for wildlife or, more positively, the need for people to engage with their environments were mentioned as 2 of the 10 responses included in this category. The responses varied in emphasis, for example 1 person was concerned about people's 'separateness' from wildlife. Another was concerned that issues of the environment 'hit the bottom of the priority list' for governments and individuals. Comments from the following 2 people exemplify this category of response:

> Lack of awareness. It's awareness again, people are just not aware that it is the natural world that keeps us alive, it's not that we don't look after it – I hate it when journalists and such like use phrases like 'we have to look after the wildlife'. It looks after us, there is no doubt that it looks after us...People are so divorced from nature in so many ways. The natural habitat is the house and the natural mode of transport is the motor car...Without sort of making them hippies or farmers or something, it's about bring them back into touch intellectually with the natural cycle (E6).

> You know there are some wonderful things out there and I think that people are missing them and not realising how beautiful the world is...everything is going to be indoors in a man-made world and beautiful wildlife is going to feature on television programmes and not as an experience (E2).

Figure 46 on page 240 summarises all the categories of all the issues believed to be important by the sample:

Figure 46 Educational staff's views on issues thought to affect UK's wildlife

ISSUE AFFECTING WILDLIFE	NUMBER OF RESPONSES	EXAMPLES OF COMMENTS
People's ignorance / the need to value wildlife	10	...I think that until people start giving it some kind of value, whether it's economic or more tangible than 'oh it's quite pretty', then it's always going to come second to questions of jobs and concrete economy (E11).
Forms of pollution/climate/ global warming	7	Pollution, to some extent, but I think that it's possibly getting better (E5).
Farming/ food production/ fishing	6	...we hold back in the long term on a lot of the things that are affecting wildlife - things about, well, like agriculture production and the way we produce foods...the use of herbicides, pesticides and the effect that that has on the environment (E7).
Transport/ road building	4	...quarrying for road building, we should be reducing the number of cars on the road. We shouldn't be putting pressure on the roads to you know, have more roads. We should be reducing cars and having public transport. (E12).
Consumption of resources	4	Water use – the human attitude of just taking what we *want* not what we need (E4).
Industrialisation/ development/ land-use	4	The abuse of the landscape and environment around us through over-development and industrialisation (E4).
Degradation of habitats/ loss of species	2	I think the loss of habitat and just the degradation of habitat, really, to our country ... and you know wildlife is part of life's rich tapestry. That's my personal view and I want to share it (E10).

Staff were also asked *why* particular issues were important to them. Responses were similar to those reported in 6.4.3.3.1 that addressed 'what it means to be concerned about wildlife'. Again, responses fitted into categories of **responsibility**, **spiritual significance or quality of life** and **damage**. **Responsibility** for wildlife was the most frequent category of response, mentioned by 5 people. 1 of the responses in this category is evident in the following interview extract:

> Interviewer: Why is this importance to you? Why are these views of space and awareness important to you?
>
> E6: Some kind of responsibility – sense of cosmic responsibility. Quite often I think the turning point has actually been passed and there may not be any point in it, but you still have to do it, we are responsible to do it. We've got brains and that's what we have to do. It's a moral thing, not religious. I don't want to couch it in emotional terms; it's just something we should do.

Another 5 members of staff suggested reasons that fitted into a **spiritual significance or quality of life** category. The following interview extract characterises a response in this category:

> Interviewer: Why do you think that these issues are significant?

> E7: I suppose because it's about quality of life and you know, it's nice to ... be surrounded, to have the natural environment on hand as it were, you know to have trees. It boils down to that kind of very specific, kind of everyday experience. It's nice to have birdsong; it's nice to be able to go for a walk in a local park and experience nature You know it's an important part of the quality of my life if you like to have access to that, and one would like to think that it's, you know, an important part of everybody's life.

2 of the staff explained that **damage** to the environment was the reason behind their concern. The statement below is an example of a response explaining why agriculture's damage to wildlife had become a concern for him:

> ...because in areas in which I work and through my own observation, certain areas of Suffolk that I'll visit are screwed up by agriculture. It's a human, personal point of view (E4).

The second person, responding within the 'damage' category, also identified agriculture to be a wildlife issue in his local area. He talked of his personal experience living in an area where farming prevails over other forms of land use:

> I suppose that it is important to me within Cornwall. Other counties will be different but in Cornwall because of the vast majority of the land is farmed and only, I suppose, less than ten percent of Cornwall is developed into housing It's what happens on the farmland, which makes all the difference (E8)

6.4.3.4 Influences upon concern

6.4.3.4.1 Memorable life experiences

As well as describing reasons for concern about specific issues, staff were asked to describe any memorable experiences which had contributed to the development of their general concern for wildlife. An enormous range of experiences was listed and described yet there was 1 category of experience more memorable than others. Every member of staff interviewed quoted a form of **outdoor experience** as memorable; this category of experience made up for more than half, (53%) of all the experiences mentioned by the staff sample. The rest of the categories of experience are listed next in Figure 47 (page 242) in rank order with the number of responses in each category, (n=54).

Figure 47 Memorable experiences for education staff

Memorable Experiences	Number of responses
'Outdoor experiences' category	**29**
Outdoor play	5
Outdoor 'experiences'	4
Holidays/outings and visits	4
Bird watching	4
Dens/ special places	3
Outdoor pursuits/ recreation	2
Tree climbing	2
Walking/ dog walking/ cycling	2
Clubs and competitions	2
Horse riding	1
'Home' category	**10**
Local wildlife	5
Parents	*2*
Friends	*2*
Books at home	1
'Personal characteristics and emotions' category	**7**
Memorable emotions	4
Personal inquisitive nature	2
Interest in animals	1
'People' category	***7***
Teachers	*3*
Parents	*2*
Friends	*2*
'Education' category	**6**
Teachers	*3*
School	2
Degree	1
'Media' category	**2**
Television	2

Of the responses, there were 7 that identified particular **people** who were thought to be significant in the lives of some of the staff. These responses formed a sub-category of 'People', highlighted in italics. 'People' comprised teachers, parents and friends, who made up 13% of the total set of memorable experiences revealed.

Staff were asked to state when they experienced these influences. Responses were placed within 3 ages phases: age 0-7 years, age 8-14 years and age 15-21 years. These time phases were determined from staff's quotations of specific ages, class years in school and from references to being very young or a teenager. Nearly every member of staff stated that experiences fell within at least two age phases. It is most noticeable that over 75% of the responses cited times, people and incidents *before adolescence*. 7 people quoted experiences in the first age phase (0-7 years) and 9 noted memorable experiences in the second age phase (8-14 years). Only 5 Reponses made reference to experiences occurring between ages 15 and 21.

The following extracts are from interviews with 3 staff. They present vignettes of memorable experiences and the time phases to which they relate:

E2's experiences from age 5 (age phase 1)

E2: Well, I was very lucky in the fact that every holiday I used to go and stay on my uncle's farm so I had the opportunity to be outdoors and outside a lot of the time so I could go and lose myself in a wood or a corner of a field in some little hidey-hole that was safe from the tractor and...life experiences? Just because, you know, every time I went for a walk or a cycle ride into the open countryside, I always felt better... it's invigorating and being in a school room or um a shopping precinct always made me feel very claustrophobic.

Interviewer: What age were you when you went to your uncle's farm?

E2: The farm, yes. The first time I was left there, I was just 5. I remember it as being very traumatic because my parents were driving away and...they left me there. Yes my parents didn't really do much in the outdoor sort of life oh and caravanning, actually, I remember. I remember at the age of 11 in the middle of the New Forest, sitting there thinking 'isn't this wonderful... in a completely quiet glade of my own'. I used to always choose the caravan sites that my parents went to and they would let me choose the ones that had, like, 5 caravans in the corner of the field, which was great. I really enjoyed that – holidays in the middle of nowhere, I must have been a complete loner, the way I'm talking here...yeah, I remember it being on my own, actually seeking out solitude.

E6' experiences as a teenager and as a young child (phases 1 and 2)

Interviewer: Can you describe any memorable life experiences which you feel have developed you concern for wildlife?

E6: I remember the thing that first brought me into birds. I started off with birds – quite a lot of people do – it was a Song Thrush singing in a Hawthorne tree one evening. I thought it was a Nightingale, I didn't know the difference. It was in my parents' garden when I was a young teenager. I always remember the, you know, sort of 20 minutes. I just stood there listening to this thing singing, blasting out its song and the sun was setting and it was a really nice calm warm evening - that one moment, I was 13 or 14 I think.... before that I lived in the South of France, so I've always lived near the sea and mountains, there has always been sea and mountains.

Interviewer: When did you live in the South of France?

E6: Up to about age one and then came back here. We used to go back every summer for a month or two to stay with my grandparents and the ecology there influenced me a lot. It was very dry and prickly and lots of blue flowers and butterflies and lizards, that sort of embedded in my head... and it's given me a structure, a life which a lot of people get from religion – I get it from nature.

E8's experiences at school and University (phase 3)

E8: I can think of things which have kind of increased my interest in wildlife like for example the series Life on Earth, that came out at an age when I was ready to be influenced and, you know, I found that very inspiring.

Interviewer: Did you have an interest before that?

E8: Yes I was actually in the first year of a Zoology degree at the time but even so, you can sort of go on doing a degree without being all that enthused but that was something which really made me think. I was always interested in animals and you know I enjoyed Biology at school. It seemed the most appropriate thing really to carry on doing a degree in Zoology and I suppose something which was very influential was meeting my first newt!

Interviewer: When was that?

E8: That was when I was at university. I did an undergraduate project concerned with physiology in Great Crested Newts, so that was when I was about 20 or 21 or

> something like that. I was brought up in a town so I had never seen a newt until then... to do the work on great crested newts, that was a turning point.

When asked whether there was *one particularly significant* life experience that had influenced the concern of staff, 2 people had clearly significant experiences. 10 said that nothing in particular stood out in their minds. 3 of the 10 said that there was definitely no single moment in their lives that had developed concern. These are their comments:

> A great traumatic life moment? No I am still waiting for that! (E6).

> I can't think of any single one thing, it's just a gradual progression and, you know identification of what I found most interesting in nature and what I found most interesting working with nature (E8).

> No I think it was much more of a sequence (E3).

However, 7 of the 10 did go on to recount memorable experiences that were thought to be more memorable than others. More memorable experiences were usually prefaced with comments suggesting that they were part of a 'gradual progression' or 'sequence of experiences'. The categories of response from this group of 7 were similar to those illustrated in Figure 47 (page 242), though in slightly different frequencies. This time, Figure 48 overleaf reveals that a total of 25 responses was collected and, again, over 75% of the experiences described were from people's pre-adolescent years. 20% of the experiences were associated with influential people, highlighted in italics in Figure 48. Once again, **outdoor experiences** were the most memorable for the staff (28% of experiences mentioned):

Figure 48 Most memorable experiences for education staff

Most Memorable Experiences	Number of Responses
'Outdoor Experiences' category	**7**
Holidays/ trips	3
Walking	2
Secret places	1
Zoos	1
'Home' category	**6**
Local wildlife	3
Parents	3
'Personal characteristics and emotions' category	**6**
Feelings of wildlife under threat	2
Interest in animals	2
Feelings of solitude	1
Pleasure from type of work	1
'Education' category	**5**
School	3
Teachers	1
Informal education – YOC leader	1
'People' category	**5**
Parents	3
Teachers	1
Informal education – YOC leader	1

The following vignettes, are from the 2 people who recalled times that they thought had been *particularly significant*. For both people these occasions were more recent than most of the experiences detailed previously. They both occurred in adult life:

E5's significant experience from adult years

> E5: My concern...I suppose going up to Lock Garten for the first time and seeing what you have to do to protect this nest with the barbed wires and the burglar alarms and things like that and be a 24 hour guard so that's something you remember when you see it for the first time.
>
> Interviewer: When did you go up there? When was that?
>
> E5: When I first went? Must have been 15 years ago and it's still the same sort of protection needed so you get the chance to talk to the public and tell them about it.

E12's significant experience from adult years

> E12: I have to say the tree dressing project here last year, because we were working with audiences we hadn't worked with before – the youth sector, 12 – 18 year olds and using the mechanism of environmental art which I thought might be treated with suspicion and ... it's not because it's something that a lot of youngsters enjoy doing, in an informal setting - art and we reckon sculptures. And it was really satisfying to see young people having quite good understanding of trees and woodlands and actually liking them and feeling they're important. I learned from that, we should never underestimate the level of understanding of the environment amongst young people and their concern for it.

6.4.3.4.2 The influence of The Wildlife Trusts

Interviews with the education staff asked how The Wildlife Trusts had influenced the staff's concern about wildlife. Only 2 of the 12 staff had been influenced by The Wildlife Trusts before their paid employment or voluntary work with the Trusts. 1 person had learnt about the Trusts at college and the other described, as 1 of his memorable experiences, engagement in a Sunday Times Newspaper Wildlife Watch Survey. Indeed, half of the sample explicitly stated that they had not heard of The Wildlife Trusts before their paid employment or voluntary work.

Responses did not so much address how The Wildlife Trusts organisation had developed staff's concern. Instead the responses demonstrated how staff had, through working with the Trusts, encountered opportunities for personal development or for a better understanding of The Wildlife Trusts. Staff usually gave a number of responses that fitted into more than 1 category. Responses in all categories are summarised in Figure 49, followed by explanation:

Figure 49 Influence of The Wildlife Trusts

Influence	Number of responses
Provision of information	9
Respect for the organisation	5
Empowerment	3
Colleagues	3
Local influence	3

Provision of information

The most frequent response, from 9 people related to the Trusts' influence in raising staff awareness of particular issues and offering information in areas of environmental understanding. Each of the 9 responses in this **provision of information** category are listed below:

- Information regarding species and habitats
- Knowledge about earth education
- Putting practical knowledge into action
- Knowledge of nature reserves
- Reinforced existing knowledge and arguments
- Information on current issues
- Understanding of issues
- Urban wildlife as a social movement
- Information about urban conservation

Respect for the organisation

Responses from 5 staff fitted within the second **respect for the organisation** category. Staff described benefits associated with being part of The Wildlife Trust organisation and the development of their respect for the Trusts' work. The following comments exemplify this category:

> At college I was made aware of them. We used to study The Wildlife Trusts at college and um being immersed in the Trust movement in the last 10 years and I had 2 or 3 years out working for a city council and I continued as a volunteer in the Trust. But I've got tremendous respect for the Trusts – they do a fantastic job at the end of the day because they're working at the local level and with local communities (E12).

> I wouldn't say The Wildlife Trusts as a whole at a national level have (had an influence) – at a local level they have, in terms of the Urban Wildlife Trust... when I first joined the Urban Wildlife Trust, at that time X was very much involved with the organisation and obviously he is a very inspirational sort of talker and so on and one of the things that struck me about X's approach... was this emphasis on the social importance and value of Wildlife (E7).

Empowerment

The **empowerment** category contains responses from 3 people who reported that they were affected by The Wildlife Trusts' ability to empower and involve people.

Colleagues

The 3 comments in this category showed staff's appreciation for **colleagues** within The Wildlife Trusts. They were described as people ' from whom you can learn more'; people who were 'very, very encouraging' and people 'who seem to be very democratic'.

Local Influence

3 people reported the importance of **local influence** of particularly inspiring County Trusts; the influence of 3 people's Trusts had clearly been at a local level:

> Yes, I wouldn't say that The Wildlife Trusts as a whole - at a national level – have (been an influence). At a local level they have, in terms of The Urban Wildlife Trust (E7)

> ...and it was only when I started working for The Yorkshire Wildlife Trust that I became aware of what conservation management was all about.... I wouldn't necessarily say that I wanted to work for The Wildlife Trusts (E4).

> It's mainly been BBONT really...(E10).

6.4.3.4.3 The role of other NGOs

11 out of 12 staff mentioned the influence of at least 1 NGO, upon development of their concerns for wildlife. The majority of the NGO's which had had some impact on the staff were those involved in bird protection: 6 people mentioned the RSPB; 3 the YOC; 1 reported The British Ornithological Society and 1 stated the influence of their local ornithological society. The influence of these organisations and others, (though not all within a clear NGO definitions according to Chapter 3), is detailed next on page 248 in Figure 50:

Figure 50 The influence of NGOs

ORGANISATION	NUMBER OF RESPONSES	REASON FOR INFLUENCE (IF STATED)
RSPB/ YOC ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETIES	11	Access to information Bird watching competitions Interested when young: 7-10 years, 10-11years Influence of grandfather Garden bird surveys and magazine Like minded people
FRIENDS OF THE EARTH	3	Passing interest Acid rain and rainforest campaigns
GREENPEACE	2	As above Inspirational
WORLD WILDLIFE FUND FOR NATURE	1	Member before interested in more local issues
CND	1	Demonstrations in 1980's
OXFAM	1	Interest in 'Third World' issues
NATIONAL TRUST	1	Member – respect for work on public access around coastlines
SCOUTS	1	Enjoyment of outdoors, camping, like-minded people.
YOUNG FARMERS	1	Age 12- 15
LANDLIFE	1	Work contacts for 8 years
CONSERVATION CALL	1	Enjoyment of physical labour outside – university. Like minded people.
DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION CENTRE	1	Professional development. Opportunities to discuss human rights, developing countries.
MARINE CONSERVATION SOCIETY	1	Inspirational. Appealing for employment.
NONE	1	N/A

6.4.3.4.4 The influence of formal Education

Members of staff were asked whether their own formal education had influenced their personal concern about wildlife. 2 people said that their formal education definitely had no influence. Of the remaining 10, 4 said that formal education had not been influential in so far as there had been no environmental content in their learned curriculum. However, all 10 suggested that their formal education, or at least experiences gained during the *period* of formal education, had had some impact. Each person reported between 2 and 6 categories of formal-education influence. The sources of formal education influence are listed as follows:

Source of formal education influence	Number of responses
Secondary school	9
College/ university	8
Studying biology/ conservation/ ecology/zoology	6
Period for building on previous environmental interest	5
Outdoor experiences	4
Primary/ Infant school	3
People	2

Secondary school

9 people reported **secondary school** as a source of influence. However, it should be noted that in response to two earlier sets of questions concerning how staff came to work in the Trusts (see 6.4.3.2) and memorable experiences (see 6.4.3.4.1) there were few references to secondary school. Although the recollection of memorable experiences had not prompted reports of secondary school education, it seems that the period of secondary school education was key for developing or enhancing pre-existing interests.

For 6 people, secondary school was remembered for its provision of biology and/or geography. The following comment illustrates that although these subjects were chosen at secondary school, it was not necessarily the secondary schooling itself that was thought to be influential in developing a wildlife interest.

> I chose Biology and Geography A level knowing that I probably wanted to do something ecologically based and probably even when I chose GCSE's I knew that – I don't think that *came from* school... the science teacher at school was awful...I had an outside interest and knew that was what I wanted to do anyway so that was why I chose Biology. I wouldn't have chosen it because of the teachers and subject from school (E1).

2 people mentioned their secondary schools' provision of outdoor experiences, either in the school grounds or in fieldwork. The remaining person in this category merely stated that the influence of formal education had:

> ...really been right along, right from sort of beginning of secondary school, right up through sixth form and first and second degree (E11).

College/ University

The influence of **college or university** upon 8 of the sample was more varied. 3 people referred to experiencing increase in knowledge or awareness:

> Well I did a degree in ecology so that definitely had quite a big impact and that just made me aware of a lot of issues. It made me see things quite differently, a bit more scientifically (E1).

> ...it was doing my Environmental Biology degree that did have quite an influence – it looked at the different habitats and talked about the conservation issues and habitat degradation, so from that point of view it was quite important (E10).

> ...it wasn't until I went to university that I studied ecology and then, I don't know, it was an influence in as much, well yes it must have influenced me, because that's where I learned how nature works and what issues affect it so yes...(E8).

3 people quoted their degree courses as influential without giving further detail. The remaining 2 responses in this category reported the influence of university years, in particular university fieldwork and practical work.

Studying biology/ conservation/ ecology/ zoology

Responses within this category comprise references to study of biology, conservation, ecology or zoology, either at junior school, secondary school, university or all three. This comment provides illustration:

> I adored biology at school, that was my favourite subject, right the way through secondary school from the age of ... in fact right the way through primary school as well. It was always nature study or whatever that was great fun, that was the bit I enjoyed most and biology when it went on to secondary school and then you go on to do zoology at university. It was and still is very important to me (E4).

Period for building upon previous environmental interest

There were 5 instances where responses fitted into this category; 1 example has already been given. This example was a comment (from E1) within the category of 'secondary school' formal education alluded to her *previous* interest in aspects of the environment. Of the other 4 instances, 1 person expressed her initial interest in the outdoors as part of the reason for 'falling' into an Environmental Policy Degree course. Another person maintained that without her existing interest and enjoyment of wildlife related experiences she would not have done her degree. During early junior education, 1 person gained interest in animal behaviour and another became interested in dinosaurs. These interests were then thought to develop further interest in wildlife.

Outdoor experiences

4 members of staff responded within this category. The 'outdoor experiences' category included 2 references to time spent on field trips and 2 reports of influential natural or green areas at school. 1 person's fieldwork included 6 months' experience at the Institute of Terrestrial Ecology. For this person, time spent with other people was also influential in developing personal views and experience in the field of conservation. Another person mentioned her university field study work on eutrophication of the Norfolk Broads.

There following 2 extracts describe 2 people's experiences of natural or green areas in and around school:

> I guess my secondary school was an old, converted comprehensive school. It was a private school so it had a bit of green, had a few trees around so I felt that held me a bit, in terms of being on the edge of a park as well... my belief is that was an important thread, a continuous thread if you like. So many schools are playing fields and concrete (E3).

> ...when I first moved to the Wirral, I was still at primary school and we did get taken out. The school was actually on the edge of a common, a very large common and we did go out as part of school work. It was very much traditional kind of nature study, collecting things, having a nature table, that kind of thing. Um, it was nice because I sort of used to roam around the common anyway, so it was quite nice to do it as part of school as well (E7).

Primary/ Infant school

The 3 references to primary or infant education include 1 person's account of time spent in his school grounds, (see E7's comment that also fitted within the 'outdoor experiences' category). The second example is a report of infant schooling as time during which other influences occurred, (see E4's comment that follow within the 'people' category). Thirdly, 1 woman recalled the influence of primary school when she reported an instance of taking a caterpillar into class.

People

The category 'people' comprises 2 references to particular people who were thought be influential during periods of formal education. 1 member of staff referred to a lecturer who organised her university fieldwork. The other person reported the significance of a neighbour, whilst in infant schooling:

> I don't know why I liked biology. I suppose, when I was a very, very young child, I was inspired by a teenager... he was guy who lived next door. He was my kind of mentor if you like and he got me very involved in dinosaurs - you know palaeontology and stuff like that, (we wouldn't have called it that!) It was about the time of infant school, so go back about to when I was about a 6 year old, and I loved the idea of dinosaurs and so on... things sprang from that and I suppose that it's a logical starting point (E4).

Finally, *across* the categories a further theme could be identified, that is the importance of **experience** during formal education, rather than the importance of gaining knowledge. A typical example lies in the response from 1 person who responded within the categories of 'primary school', 'secondary school' and 'university/college'. She remembered the following aspects of her formal education: taking a caterpillar and chrysalis to primary school; A' level biology which addressed the 'mechanics' of plants and animals; studying habitats for an Environmental Biology Degree. This educator maintained that something experiential was necessary for her enjoyment of these things:

> But I think the most important thing is really the experience and enjoyment which have really got me interested because I would never have gone on ... never have done a degree (E10).

6.5 Summary of Chapter 6

6.5.1 Summary of 6.2

After an overview, this chapter began by presenting data corresponding to 2 interview questions that inquired about the Trusts' **educational activities**. Trust personnel's responses to these interview questions provided an extensive list of

educational activities undertaken by The Wildlife Trusts. From this list, the 5 most frequently mentioned single activities can be summarised as:

1. Watch activities
2. Events for families and community
3. Publicity
4. Walks and/or talks
5. Adult education, courses, qualifications, training

The entire list was organised into 8 broad categories of activity of Wildlife Trust educational activities:

1. Community Activities
2. Activities for members, volunteers, other adults
3. Wildlife Watch work
4. Publicity
5. Activities for and in schools
6. Work associated with 'centres'
7. Further/higher education
8. Youth work

6.5.2 Summary of 6.3

The data presented gave account of **strengths and weaknesses** associated with The Wildlife Trusts' educational provision. Firstly, the strengths were reported from 3 sources: core interview questions asking Trust personnel about best practice; a core interview question asking Trust staff about activities thought to have a significant impact and questionnaire responses providing outside views of the Trusts' strengths, from both visitors and the independent sample.

Of the many reported best practices, the 5 most frequently cited individual practices were:

1. Reserve management
2. Work making contact with local communities
3. Watch clubs and materials
4. Reserve quality
5. Partnerships

All individual best practices, of both individual Trusts and The Wildlife Trust partnership, fitted into 8 categories of best practice. The categories follow, listed in rank order.

1. Nature conservation
2. Community based and locally focussed work
3. Internal organisation and management
4. Informal education
5. Political communication
6. Media and image-focussed work
7. Formal education
8. Nothing/ don't know

Best practices were also examined according to whether they were considered a strength of the partnership or individual Trusts. **Nature conservation**, and to a lesser extent **community based and locally focussed work** were the only two categories of activities reported as strong aspects of the whole partnership's work. While **formal education** was considered to be a best practice of individual Trusts, clearly it was not perceived to be a best practice of The Wildlife Trusts partnership. Overall, the Trusts reported unequal strengths across the partnership.

Interview responses regarding best practice revealed that different views came from different Trust personnel. Directors more often identified **nature conservation** as an individual or partnership strength. A much higher proportion of educators interviewed viewed both **formal** and **informal education** activities as best practices. Educators often reported their own Trusts to have strong **internal management** and this strength enabled other best practices to flourish. Directors reported activities of **political communication** as best practices within their own Trusts. Again, this section of analysed data revealed inconsistency among best practices across Trusts in the responses from different Trust staff.

Activities believed by Trust personnel to have a significant impact fitted within the following 14 categories:

1. Schools work
2. Outdoor/wildlife experiences
3. Community and local opportunities
4. Informal education and Wildlife Watch
5. Publicity
6. Partnerships
7. Campaigning
8. People work
9. Don't know/difficult to judge
10. Empowerment
11. Centres
12. Return of people
13. Internal management
14. Conservation and reserves

Outside views of the strengths of The Wildlife Trusts' environmental education can be summarised firstly by the list of 7 favourable aspects of Trust visits, as reported by a small sample of 40 visitors to 6 Trusts:

1. Facilities
2. Wildlife
3. Quality of contact (Trust personnel)
4. Educational resources
5. Experiences (practical activities)
6. Access (to visitor centres/Trust sites)
7. Local (learning about the local environment)

The visitors who had visited other Trust sites enjoyed them for the following reasons:

1. Wildlife
2. Aesthetic reasons

3. Educational resources

The independent sample of students and Community Action Forum members differed from the visitors in their experiences of The Wildlife Trusts. Most students had neither heard of the Trusts nor visited a Trust site. Of the 6 (n=43) who had experienced a site, the reasons for enjoyment were:

1. Wildlife
2. Facilities
3. Aesthetic reasons

The forum members reported greater experience of Trust sites. Best aspects were found to be:

1. Wildlife
2. Familiarity/location of site visited
3. Facilities
4. Quality of contact
5. Enjoyment of Trust sites
6. Aesthetic reasons

Of the **weaknesses** associated with the Trusts' education provision, interview responses revealed 6 clear sets of weaknesses or obstacles experienced by the Trusts:

1. Management and organisation
2. Resources
3. Attitudes
4. Focus
5. Image
6. Political and external problems

Among external views of Trusts' weaknesses, there were few identifiable weaknesses illustrated by the visitor's experiences. Those expressed included specific problems of:

1. Educational provision
2. Site interpretation and information
3. Desire to see more wildlife at the visited site

The independent sample of both students and forum members had similar criticisms of their experiences with Trusts. For both groups, the educational functions of Trust work were indistinct. Insufficient schools-contact, publicity and an over-concentration upon conservation work, to the detriment of people, were reported criticisms.

A final outside view of Trust weaknesses was presented in the form of field note extracts. The author's field notes identified weaknesses of **management and organisation;** in particular inadequate communication between education and conservation personnel or educators. **Attitudes** of separation between conservation work and education work were evident during the author's Trust visits and were again perceived to be a problem for Trusts. The Wildlife Trusts' **image** was sometimes poorly presented during research visits and there were instances where

resources – especially buildings and locations of Trust offices or centres – were lacking and in need of presenting a more 'people-friendly' image and greater access.

6.5.3 Summary of 6.4

Section **6.4** presented three sets of data associated with the **educational culture within The Wildlife Trusts**. First, data associated with Trusts' *understandings of the term 'education'* in the context of The Wildlife Trusts were examined. Such understandings were examined through analysis of interview responses pertaining to: the meaning of education according to Trust personnel; the 'audiences' of the Trusts' education, i.e. who education is aimed at and thirdly Trust's hoped-for definitions of education. Trusts' perceived meanings of education were classified into 7 categories:

1. Raising awareness
2. Experiences
3. Empowerment
4. Education defined in relation to other Trust work
5. Knowledge and understanding
6. Information about Trust work
7. Lifelong learning

There were perceptible differences between directors' meanings of education and those used by educators. Directors were more likely to define education in relation to other Trust activities and were keener for education to cross over with other work such as marketing and conservation. For educators, Trust education was viewed as separate from other Trust work, especially conservation.

The Wildlife Trusts' education was found to be aimed at 7 audiences:

1. Wide audiences
2. Formal education audiences
3. Young people
4. Adults
5. Decision makers
6. Land managers
7. Internal staff members

It was clear that some audiences were a low priority for Trust education, for instance the elderly, disabled and young adults.

Personnel's hoped-for definitions of education were reported in 2 ways; firstly personnel 'defined' education through criticism and/or suggestions for change. For example the word 'education' was disliked particularly amongst directors. Personnel passed critical judgement on aspects of Wildlife Watch; personnel identified the need to broaden Wildlife Trust education and they identified problems with broadening education or changing it. Such problems were reported to relate to The Wildlife Trusts' history, traditions and to the sometimes-unwanted involvement of trustees. Secondly, some Trust personnel offered more precise definitions of education, which were categorised as:

1. Raising awareness
2. Empowerment
3. Policy
4. Knowledge and understanding
5. Audience diversity

The second set of data examined in section 6.4.2 concerned *ideals for education.* These ideals were gained from interview responses that described what personnel would wish for if given a 'blank slate' for Wildlife Trust education. There were 13 categories of response, namely:

1. Coordinated strategy
2. Audiences and issues
3. Wildlife Trust image
4. Education image and organisation
5. Influence policy
6. Nature reserves
7. Widen audiences/access
8. Watch
9. Identify niches
10. Visitor centres
11. Fundraising
12. Continue strengths
13. Membership

By supposing that the educational culture of the Trusts is influenced by the experiences and beliefs of the Trust educators themselves, the third and final part of section 6.4 reported on the *influences and experiences affecting the environmental concern* of 12 education staff. Section 6.4 began with biographical details and backgrounds of the 12 education staff

The staff ages were found to be between 20 and 50; all staff were brought up outside urban areas; their job titles varied but all included an environmental or conservation emphasis often, but not always, with an education component. Previous occupations experienced by staff were usually of an environmental and/or educational nature; academic and vocational qualifications were strongly based in conservation or environmental fields. The sample showed a high engagement in many environmental activities but low participation in lobbying and only one third of the sample were NGO members. The attraction to work in The Wildlife Trusts was principally attributed to the opportunities afforded to work with people or in a broad role combining conservation and people. In addition, the staff gave other reasons for Wildlife Trust work, including: previous Wildlife Trust work; existing environmental interests; hopes to work in the field of conservation; Trusts' locations; the influence of previous work and teaching.

Concerns for wildlife were not limited to wildlife alone but also included concern for nature and the environment in general. The 9 categories for the sample's ideas about what it means to be concerned for wildlife were:

1. Responsibility
2. Damage
3. Spiritual significance/quality of life

4. Future
5. Management
6. Helping people
7. Effect of upbringing
8. Sustainable development
9. Resources

The nature of the sample's concern for wildlife was also examined in terms of the environmental issues that were thought to be most important in the United Kingdom. Above all, **people's ignorance** was viewed to be the most significant issue facing the environment. Other issues were connected to: pollution, farming, transport, resource consumption, industrialisation/development and depletion of habitats or species. The reasons staff gave for believing these issues to be important were again primarily related to their feelings of **responsibility** and because of the **spiritual significance or quality of life** bestowed by nature that ought not be destroyed.

The influences upon the sample's concern for wildlife and the environment included memorable life experiences that were reported within the categories of:

1. Outdoor experiences
2. Home
3. Personal characteristics, emotions
4. People
5. Education
6. Media (television)

Vignettes of staff's memorable experiences were presented to illustrate the categories. These vignettes were accompanied by statements on periods of life during which experiences occurred. Noticeably, all the reported outdoor experiences occurred prior to adolescence. Most staff felt that there were no *particularly significant* experiences that influenced their concern, except for 2 people who reported particularly significant experiences in their adult years. The most memorable experiences reported by the remaining staff fitted into 5 of the 6 above categories; there were no reports of media as a *most* memorable influence.

In examination of particular influences, The Wildlife Trusts themselves provided staff with valuable information and opportunities for developing their understanding of wildlife. This Wildlife Trust influence usually developed once staff were working for Trusts. Most influential NGOs were ornithological organisations and newer environmental groups, rather than traditional conservation bodies. The categories of formal education influence can be summarised as follows:

1. Secondary school
2. College/ university
3. Studying biology/ conservation/ ecology/zoology
4. Period for building on previous environmental interest
5. Outdoor experiences
6. Primary/ Infant school
7. People

The next chapter presents the thesis' Discussion and Conclusions.

Chapter 7 Discussion and Conclusions

7.1 Overview of Chapter 7

The purpose of this chapter is to address the research questions by linking the research findings with the literature reviewed. In responding to the thesis' research questions, this Discussion and Conclusions chapter also presents suggestions for future Wildlife Trust educational practice.

It is not the author's aim to restate the summary of findings presented at the end of the last chapter. Instead, the reader is engaged in discussion of the empirical research in greater depth as dominant themes of the empirical research are articulated in association with the literature reviewed. Where appropriate these themes are set in the context of the findings and recommendations from The Wildlife Trusts' education review (the review's conclusions and key recommendations may be found in Appendix F, page 322). There are instances where this study reveals ideas or themes that have no place in the research literature reviewed. In such circumstances, discussion draws on data analysis to justify overarching themes and make recommendations for Wildlife Trust educational practice.

This chapter is organised in 6 sections beginning here with **7.1** as an **Overview of Chapter 7** and closing with **Conclusions** in **7.5.**

Sections **7.2**, **7.3** and **7.4** largely follow the layout of the findings in Chapter 6. Section **7.2** discusses the **Educational activities** of The Wildlife Trusts; **7.3** is concerned with **Strengths and weaknesses** of the educational provision and **7.4** discusses The Wildlife Trusts' **Educational culture**. Although Chapter 7 presents discussion of educational activities; strengths and weaknesses and educational culture in three distinct sections, there is of course necessary overlap. The author specifically intends that there are instances in 7.2, 7.3 and 7.4 where the three aspects of The Wildlife Trusts education work are discussed in conjunction with each other.

Section 7.2 is set out so that the eight broad categories of activities, asserted in Chapter 6, form eight subsections or themes of discussion: **Community Activities; Activities for members, volunteers, other adults; Wildlife Watch work; Publicity; Activities for and in schools; Work associated with 'centres'; Further/higher education; Youth work.**

The strengths and weaknesses in section 7.3 are discussed under headings that relate to seven overarching themes. The seven themes that emerge from analysis of the Trusts' strengths and weaknesses in light of the literature review are concerned with: **Providing experiences in wildlife environments**; **Educating communities and educating locally**; **Attracting people to The Wildlife Trusts' education**; **Sustaining education: members and volunteers**; **Educating young people including children; Empowering decisions and action**; **Managing The Wildlife Trusts' education**.

Section 7.4 presents three dominant themes of the Trusts' educational culture that are discussed in the context of this thesis' reviewed literature. They are: **Ambiguous and negative meanings of education**, the **Importance of people** and the **Value of environmental experience and affective response**.

The study's **Conclusions** in section **7.5** emphasise the whole study's overarching themes and return to the two core research questions. Section 7.5 also states the limitations of the study and suggestions for further research, relating to methodology, educational practice and the role of NGOs.

At this point it is worth reminding the reader of the thesis' aims. The purpose of this study was to answer two core questions:

(1) What does The Wildlife Trusts, as a UK NGO, do in its delivery of environmental education?

(2) What can The Wildlife Trusts do its delivery of environmental education, that is to say what are its limits and potentials?

The empirical research addressed these two questions by investigating three aspects of The Wildlife Trusts' work:

(i) The educational activities of The Wildlife Trusts (for the data collection period of September 1998 to July 1999).

(ii) The strengths and weaknesses of The Wildlife Trusts' educational provision.

(iii) The educational culture within The Wildlife Trusts.

This thesis set out to answer the research questions using literature reviewed in Chapters 2, 3 and 4. These areas of literature were concerned with:

- The Wildlife Trusts and the conservation movement: (i) the origins of The Wildlife Trusts as a conservation organisation – their establishment and growth through the Society for Promotion of Nature Reserves. (ii) Conservation and people – the involvement of a wider public in the conservation movement.
- Non-Government organisations – NGO characteristics and the place of The Wildlife Trusts as an NGO.
- Environmental Education – development of understanding and approaches.

The Discussion and Conclusions chapter now proceeds with section 7.2 that discusses the educational activities of The Wildlife Trusts.

7.2 The educational activities of The Wildlife Trusts

The Wildlife Trusts' educational activities are clearly numerous; they vary from Trust to Trust but all fall within 8 broad categories of activity outlined in Chapter 6. These same 8 categories are reported in The Wildlife Trusts' education review Final Report (Palmer and Lancaster 1999), but for the review the categories were not set in the context of this thesis' wide literature consultation or discussed in the depth that follows.

Very many small categories of educational activities and individual activities were revealed by this study. A synthesised view of individual educational activities, their

limits and potentials is tabled in Appendix G on page 326. Here, the 8 broad categories of The Wildlife Trusts' educational activity are discussed in light of reviewed literature, in order to answer this study's core aims (1) and (2).

7.2.1 Community activities

The Wildlife Trusts' educational activities are by no means limited to activities for young people and children. The Trusts' frequent citation of community activities demonstrates that individual Trusts and The Wildlife Trust partnership view local communities as targets for education, both as naturally defined localities and as groups of individuals. Local communities, and less frequently visitors to those communities, are provided with educational activities that are good at developing people's existing interest in or connection with nature. Examples are: wildlife gardening promotion, wildlife information services or communication with farmers or landowners. Other activities, such as events, awareness raising projects and holidays are equally capable of drawing in those people with existing wildlife interests and others who may be new to ideas of conservation. However, Trust personnel revealed a danger that some community activities, such as park regeneration, are more attractive to 'the converted' and 'regular' members of a community rather than the new audiences unfamiliar with conservation activities. Such appeal entrenches The Wildlife Trusts in their historical roots of exclusive rather than inclusive appeal to the public audiences (Yearly 1991).

The Wildlife Trusts' education activities for communities reflect notions of 'community participation' advocated by international environmental initiatives and research of the 1980s and 1990s (WCED 1987; Warburton 1995; 1998). These concepts of community participation include: action, education, involvement, consultation and empowerment. They are noticable in The Wildlife Trusts' understandings and definitions of 'education' itself, which demonstrates that The Wildlife Trusts have embedded theories of community education at the heart of their educational practice.

The Wildlife Trusts' provision of community activities is compatible with Trusts' aspirations to communicate with wide audiences and target whole communities, an aspiration supported by Woolnough (1993). In providing education activities for local communities and community groups, the Trusts adopt principles of empowering people who may not be able to effect change if they were acting as individuals (Milbrath 1981). In this way, people acting as a community or a group may develop a PED[16] through experiencing feelings of 'belongingness' or 'we-ness' (Granzin and Olsen 1991).

Social change for the local community and beyond may be brought about through the Trusts' community activities, for example among church communities who are involved in local Trust-organised churchyard conservation activities. The possibility for social change via people's involvement in their local places and with local resources is praised by Warburton (1995;1998). However, it receives cautionary note from Goodwin (1998), who regards that a social change may not always be viewed a tool of conservation and may be potentially off-putting to pure

[16] PED or pro-environmental disposition is a term introduced by the author of this thesis to denote an individual's or a group's possession of any of the following: positive environmental knowledge, attitude, concerns, sensitivity and/or behaviour.

conservationists who feel that non-experts cannot do the true job of conservation. Indeed this study revealed that many education personnel feel that conservationists and directors adhere to this view. The Wildlife Trusts needs to decide how it, as an organisation, responds to such attitudes that can weaken their community activities.

The very local level of The Wildlife Trusts' work is an NGO strength. The Trusts' involvement of individuals, enabling them to effect environmental change, is in keeping with Princen and Fingers' (1994) views of environmental NGO roles. According to McNeely (1997), there is a chance however that as an NGO enables community activities to flourish, groups and individuals may no longer need the NGOs. The Wildlife Trusts have witnessed aspects of this issue as local groups and long-standing trustees develop their own educational agenda and present difficulties in altering an entrenched educational culture. In the recommendations of the Final Report (Palmer and Lancaster 1999) for the education review, it is suggested that terms of service for education trustees should be more clearly set out.

Only a small number of Trusts involve communities in Local Agenda 21 work, yet those that do are engaging in vital NGO work (McCoy and McCully 1993). Additionally, these Trusts act beyond the local level by addressing global issues. The Wildlife Trust partnership plays an NGO role in its response to the 1994 Biodiversity Action Plan, providing communities with educational activities engaging people in reporting and changing local environments through globally inspired conservation planning.

This study's external sample believes that The Wildlife Trusts could provide *more* educational activities for communities. Both the Trusts themselves and their 'users' believe that community activities are limited by targeting insufficiently broad audiences. Woolnough (1993) provides a potential reason why. Choosing to educate broad audiences, making conservation issues relevant and interesting to wide numbers of people is difficult. The added problems of making Biodiversity issues relevant to the public are illustrated elsewhere (Macnaghten et al 1995; Di Silvestro 1993; Evans 1996). This study shows that the Trusts' aspirations to broaden educational audiences and make Biodiversity more relevant to people are additionally restricted by insufficient resources as well as attitudes of the Trusts' decision makers.

Previous research, supported by this study's in-depth interviews, reveals potential for developing work with *particular* community groups such as: The Women Institute, families and The National Childbirth Trust. Parents, often women, present hopes that nature and wildlife should be available for future generations and children (Palmer 1993). 5 out of 6 women from this thesis' sample of 12 educators expressed their concern for wildlife in terms of concern for future generations. Parents are also listed among recommended target audiences for environmental education in the research of Chawla (1999); Rovira (2000); Ballantyne, Connell and Fien (1998). Given that parenthood and interpersonal relationships may be important experiences in PED development, parents and families may be especially important communities for further Wildlife Trust education work.

7.2.2 Members, volunteers and other adults

Lowe (1972) has suggested that an environmental organisation's period of establishment is a key determinant of its later style of communication. Indeed,

reports from such a large number of Trusts' listing activities for members, volunteers and other adults reflect the SPNR's initial focus upon communicating with members (Yearly 1991). The original membership of the early Wildlife Trusts organisation, the SPNR, was elite and well educated even though education of 'public opinion' to a 'better knowledge of nature study' was one original SPNR aim (Sheail 1998). Trust personnel in this study reported that current activities for members, volunteers and adults are limited in their appeal to the wider public. Some observation and recording programmes are specifically aimed to attract new groups of adults but other activities such as adult training courses are described as:

> ok...to produce naturalists.

Producing naturalists is without doubt an acceptable aspect of an environmental NGOs' educational work. If Trusts are to continue to require and demonstrate high levels of conservation expertise – as suggested by visitors and the educational staff interviewed in this study – then people must be educated to become conservationists for future generations. In this way, individual Trusts' hopes for education 'to be a way of doing the conservation job' may be fulfilled. However, The Wildlife Trusts may have limited appeal to members if the organisation overlooks their recreational interests and assumes that they are attracted to the purely scientific reserves or activities (Bull 1986). This study demonstrates that adults visiting the Trusts, who may be potential or existing members, enjoy Trusts that offer good facilities and good quality communication from Wildlife Trust personnel on site. Historically, members have noted the need to broaden public involvement in conservation; they are also aware of The Wildlife Trusts' image problems, their need for strong leadership and more publicity (Micklewright 1986).

Matters faced by The Wildlife Trusts in the past may yet limit the organisation's membership growth. Trusts' allegiance to the partnership image has been a problem for the organisation since 1976 (Bull 1986). This study's interviews revealed that individual Trusts are still concerned that a stronger Wildlife Trusts national profile might reduce or dilute local Trust identities. The Wildlife Trusts should bear in mind the need to regularly examine the interests and requirements of members as well as volunteers on these matters.

In this study, Trust personnel more often referred to volunteers as a group to be educated rather than to deliver education, with the exception of volunteers' involvement in the delivery of Watch activities for children. As one Trust educator suggested, volunteers:

> ...want something at the end – to be given accreditation.

The significance of Trusts' educational and training activities for volunteers should not be overlooked. Firstly such activities are valuable in order to avoid volunteers feeling helpless (Powell 1997; Goodwin 1998). Secondly, people often volunteer for The Wildlife Trusts to gain employment experience and it may be that this in turn proves beneficial to the Trusts. The 12 educators interviewed in this study report that volunteering and previous work experiences with the Trusts influenced their later decisions to seek paid employment with The Trusts. Such experiences can encourage other people to want to work for The Wildlife Trusts in later life. In the field of life experience research, Palmer and Suggate (1996) and Chawla (1999) indicate that experiences of work can provide important influences in the

development of a PED. Thirdly, opportunities to volunteer for an NGO can, according to Juniper (1988), be attractive to potential Wildlife Trust members who find that active volunteering activities are more appealing than involvement in an organisation through passive membership.

7.2.3 Wildlife Watch activities

The children's club Wildlife Watch is potentially the best way for The Wildlife Trusts to attract junior members of both local Trusts and the partnership, who later become adult Wildlife Trust members. Environmental club membership can offer children feelings associated with being a part of a team (Geller 1995) that may subsequently lead to PED development. A wildlife club for children can provide an ongoing set of wildlife-related experiences rather than one-off experiences. Such ongoing and repeated experiences were regarded as influential among the 12 educators in this study as well as in previous research (Peterson and Hungerford 1981; Horwitz 1996).

Watch targets children who are at a potentially important stage in their life to receive experiences that may develop a PED. The *direct* contact with wildlife is important for children (Hart 1997); Watch clubs that provide wildlife related activities and outdoor experiences are more likely than mailed packs of information to effectively educate children. Hart (1997) praises Watch activities of the past for their abilities to engage children in surveying their local small-scale environments. Another benefit of Watch activities is that they complement goals of the UK Biodiversity Action Plan, which advocates local people's involvement in scientific monitoring processes.

The Watch education programme was discussed more readily in Trust interviews in terms of altering its management rather than making changes to the activities themselves. The Trusts' lack of agreement over Watch management and the disputes concerning Watch's domination by National Office are notable issues that arise in the education review's Final Report (Palmer and Lancaster 1999). This study's reflection on these issues now identifies The Wildlife Trusts as an NGO restricted by its internal management and its introspective disposition (Jacobson 1997; Martin 1996). Certainly, the Trusts' competitive attitude was evident in this study's interviews: there were numerous comparisons between Watch and the Young Ornithologists' Club (YOC). The memory of YOC still remains in the minds of this study's educators who were influenced by this aspect of NGO activities and so a deeper understanding of the strengths of YOC may be useful to the Trusts, providing them with a better knowledge of the niches for Wildlife Trust junior members. Much previous research comparing environmental groups has done so in terms of their membership sizes (Lowe and Goyder 1983; Adams 1996; Evans 1997; Barkham 1989). This study proposes that future research might more beneficially compare NGOs' educational activities.

The media-led campaigns that propelled Watch in its early years (Perring 1983; Jones and Talbot 1995) may provide ways to promote future Watch activities to children both locally and nationally. There is a clear need for Wildlife Trust unity for successful running of Watch. Watch activities are greatly limited by the current lack of confidence in one single approach to Watch. An approach should aim to provide the most important experiences that this study has identified as influential for developing a PED: frequent and regular outdoor experiences; opportunities to develop affective responses to local environments; means of identifying,

understanding and knowing how to alter local environmental problems. There is also potential for some aspects of Watch activities to be re-branded and targeted more greatly at teenagers and older children. Even though this study's questions about Watch activities revealed little comment on Watch's ability to include older youths, such an audience is clearly a low priority for The Wildlife Trusts' education. A youth membership, with associated activities, could benefit the Trusts by bridging the gap between children's Watch membership and later adult membership.

7.2.4 Publicity activities

The Wildlife Trusts' publicity work is certainly viewed by Trusts to be a part of their educational activities. This is evident not only in interview responses specifically about educational activities but also in Trusts' views that publicity work has significant impact upon people. It is perhaps for this reason – *the perceived impact* – that publicity activities are mentioned by such a large proportion of Trusts and viewed by directors as a means for all Trust personnel to deliver education. Publicity can be viewed as one of the more visible and 'measurable' sets of education activities. Trust personnel discussed the perceived impact of publicity in terms of column inches, airtime, the ability of leaflets to reach numbers and the way that door-to-door recruitment is 'getting to most people'.

Publicity activities are presented by most Trusts as a set of *initial* strategies to interest people in wildlife, to raise their awareness about conservation issues and to attract new members. Such means for raising awareness fit very well with The Wildlife Trusts' conceptualisation of education; most Trusts in this study stated that education means changing attitudes, altering prejudices, consciousness-raising, all of which fit into an 'awareness raising' category.

Campaigning activities perhaps represent a further stage beyond initial awareness raising. Most individual Trusts' campaigns address local issues or have local means for addressing national issues. One Trust director commented:

> ...our local population understand; local communities run them [campaigns] after we set them up.

It is the *local* issues and the locally run campaigns that may have the most impact. The educators' in-depth interview responses in this study are mirrored in other research demonstrating how local negative environmental experiences can be important in PED development (Palmer and Suggate 1996; Peterson and Hungerford 1981; Sward 1996). The Wildlife Trusts' campaigns should be planned to reflect these research findings.

Other publicity activities reported in this study include a set of 'general publicity activities' (use of media, leaflets, web pages, use of libraries, tourist information offices). Although media appear to have a low but relevant impact upon PED development (Altwater et al 1985; Salwen 1988; Palmer 1995; Palmer and Suggate 1996), the Trusts could take into account the fact that television may be a more important source of conservation of interests among public audiences (MORI 1987), than among the environmentally concerned educators who may have been more heavily influenced by direct experiences of nature and the outdoors. As an NGO, The Wildlife Trusts' use of media could be an important part of its strategy to disseminate its achievements and achieve public support proposed by McCoy and

McCully (1993). Previous research suggests that the Trusts have benefited and will benefit from media publicity (Lowe 1972; Juniper 1988; Perring 1983; Jones and Talbot 1995).

The Wildlife Trusts' interpretation, involves signage and information boards around Trust sites. As publicity for both the Trusts and for wildlife, it has potential to create a unified and memorable Wildlife Trust image. The author's observations of weak 'corporate' image and poor sign-posting at some visited Trust sites demonstrated that Trusts' reserves and site interpretation is ripe for development and in strongly in need of greater partnership and funding.

The presentation of 'corporate' image, the national branding of an NGO and the financial partnerships developed by The Wildlife Trust may be an issue of concern for the Trusts. Potter and Adams' (1993) concerns about the ethics of presenting nature as a 'product' for consumers are relevant to the Trusts. This study illustrates that The Wildlife Trusts use publicity that can cross the boundaries of both government and commercial sectors, yet photo shoots with MPs and advertisement through commercial home improvement and gardening outlets may compromise the NGO status of The Wildlife Trusts as an NGO that does '...not pursue the objectives of government or corporate actors' (Princen and Finger 1994:16). Certainly the interview responses in this study demonstrate no anxiety about publicity-generating partnerships with commerce. Historically, the Trusts have achieved considerable publicity through such sources before (Potts 1998). The author posits that government and commercial sectors can be used to fund Wildlife Trusts' publicity activities; the Trusts have the potential to regulate these partnerships and profit from commercially linked publicity. It is possible that closer partnerships with commerce may reduce the Trusts' historically financial dependency upon Government, (Lowe and Goyder 1983). However, The Wildlife Trusts should be aware that there are new matters to confront if the Trusts are accused of pursuing capitalist and economic aims.

7.2.5 Schools activities

Whereas The Wildlife Trusts' education review reveals the importance of school activities, this study engages in much deeper discussion about the Trusts' involvement in education activities for schools.

Education activities for schools are delivered by many Trusts, but not uniformly across The Wildlife Trust partnership. The majority of local Trusts engaging in schools work face some of the dilemmas that exist in providing publicity activities. As Fien (1993) implies, delivery of environmental education in schools involves engagement with institutions bound by economic aims, traditional politics and capitalist society. Environmental education in schools was originally guided by the voluntary sector (NAEE 1976). Environmental education was then superseded by Government influence from the late 1970s and dominated by the quantitative paradigm of research *about* the environment and for environmental management (Huckle 1993). At the time of writing, the UK Government includes aspects of environmental education within a newly defined theme of Education for Sustainable Development that may be taught through all curriculum subjects. Although there may be more emphasis upon environmental education in the revised National Curriculum of 1999, (Summers et al 2000), the greater emphasis guarantees no greater environmental consciousness amongst school pupils. After the 2002 addition

of Citizenship as a subject in secondary schools, this study has found that the current UK National Curriculum continues to prioritise economics over environment (DfEE 1999).

As an NGO, The Wildlife Trusts may wish to question such prioritisation. This study found that The Wildlife Trusts espouse education that includes public empowerment and influence over educational and wildlife policies. This kind of education is analogous to ideas of critical and participatory education (Martin 1996; Huckle 1993). Although decision-making is referred to in National Curriculum documentation and has long been a theme promoted in environmental initiatives and research, The Wildlife Trusts' ideals for employment of a critical sort of education in schools involves questioning systems of political power. This presents a challenge to which The Wildlife Trusts partnership must decide if it can respond, if it is to work with the schools National Curriculum.

The findings of this thesis support the idea that there are two key aspects of research relating to school-based environmental education, which The Wildlife Trusts are in a position to address. Firstly, The Wildlife Trusts are potentially able to respond to the body of research that indicates the value of formal education (including schools) as a means of delivering environmental education (Arbuthnot 1977; Arcury 1990; Arcury and Christianson 1993; Hines et al 1986/7). The Wildlife Trusts' activities for junior schools, secondary schools and the Trusts' provision of INSET for teachers can help to resolve some of the many of the problems that teachers experience in delivering environmental education.

The Wildlife Trusts' assistance to teachers, as well as the Trusts' provision of INSET may be an extremely valuable contribution to environmental education. Teachers have been highlighted as an important target for environmental education in international initiatives (IUCN/UNEP/WWF 1991; UNCED 1992). Trust education staff in this study mentioned, albeit rarely, the influence of teachers in developing their environmental concern. Teachers, or more specifically role models, are believed to play an important part in environmental education according to Gunderson (1989) and Sward (1996) and there may be potential for schoolteachers or Wildlife Trust personnel to become such 'influential people'. The Wildlife Trusts' capability to further engage teachers to become environmental education role models rests on large scale funding for schools work, as well as commitment to schools work in the long term.

The second key area of Wildlife Trusts' schools work relates to research proposing that formal education in schools is less influential upon developing a PED than might be hoped or expected (Palmer 1988b; MORI 1987). The ineffectiveness of formal education may be linked to the aforementioned problems faced by teachers or it may be that schools and formal education settings are simply not the best means for PED development among most people. The Wildlife Trusts are in a position to redress this issue by offering educational activities for schools, beyond the National Curriculum, using activities such as Watch.

Outdoor experiences for schools could be used as a basis for teaching elements of the National Curriculum's Citizenship subject, which includes 3 components labelled 'social and moral responsibility', 'community involvement' and 'political literacy' (DfES 2002). Such a proposal is justified as the 12 educators interviewed in this study revealed their environmental concern to be associated with feelings of

responsibility, spiritual connection with the environment and enhanced quality of life through environmental experiences. The educators also reported gaining pleasure from helping people. These findings, coupled with reviewed literature stating the relevance of beliefs and values upon environmental concern, demonstrate the potential for connecting environmental experiences with Citizenship issues in the National Curriculum. The outcome may be a means of enabling schoolchildren to form affective and moral responses connected with aspects of a PED.

Schools activities have an historical place in the educational work of The Wildlife Trusts. Reserves-based education was originally developed for those in formal education and research to understand the use of reserves (Huxley 1947). Current Wildlife Trust education should include more schools work and provide more teaching resources, according to this study's external sample. Past public surveys suggest that there is more room for environmental education in schools (MORI 1987). This thesis' findings highlight The Wildlife Trusts' view that schools activities have a significant impact upon people. However, schools work has a low rank among best practices of The Wildlife Trust partnership. None of the directors interviewed listed schools activities as a real strength of either their own Trust or the partnership. This potential misunderstanding of strengths or lack of organisational 'self' awareness presents a challenge to the Trusts.

One way in which Trusts can engage in schools education is to restrict themselves to addressing *limited* aspects of the National Curriculum, delivering education only on its wildlife sites and reserves. In this way, Trusts can combine the two sets of activities they consider to have the greatest impact upon people: schools activities and outdoor or wildlife experiences. The research literature reviewed in this thesis states the positive influence of outdoor experiences upon PED development and supports their inclusion in schools environmental education activities. The Trusts' own education staff reported school education to be influential where it provided outdoor experiences and encounters with nature. By similar line of argument, fieldwork and holidays using the Trusts' reserves as their key assets may provide more effective experiences for children than classroom teaching (Tanner 1985; Dettman-Easler and Pease 1999; Palmer and Neal 1994). Such outdoor and/or fieldwork experiences should not be one-off experiences but repeated and developed throughout the school years.

7.2.6 Use of centres

Centres are used by The Wildlife Trusts in quite different ways. Less than half the Trusts reported using Visitor Centres among their education activities. Garden centres or sites where gardens and habitats are displayed are also a part of the Trusts' centres-based education work. The benefit of this more portable form of centre-use lies in its ability to promote The Wildlife Trusts and offer experiences of wildlife or habitats at a lower cost than Trust-owned visitor centres and perhaps at locations where more people may experience the work of the Trusts. Historically, on-site education has been typical among the Trusts; the 1970s and early 1980s were key periods when the Trusts developed visitor and study centres (Perring 1983). Trust personnel portray study centres as places specifically designed and used for education activities, often for schools. Less emphasis is put on these places' suitability as drop-in centres for passing visitors. Such a narrow role of study centres can limit their capacity to reach wide numbers of audiences.

Centres are thought to have significant impact upon people, although by a less than a quarter of Trusts. It seems that the perceived impact is manifest in the visibility of visitor centres and the fact that many people may pass through them. Certainly, this study's Trust visitors revealed that centres are appreciated among other good quality reserves-facilities that enable the wildlife and habitats to be experienced. Visitors also stated the possibility to make more use of visitor centres. The potential for The Trusts to amplify the impact of their centres lies in *all* Wildlife Trusts using a centre of some sort and using it to encourage regular and repeated use. As these Trust personnel remarked, there is a need

> ...to encourage repeat visits to use the centre as a resource rather than annual visits.

> Big events have an impact but that's relatively short term compared with a centre, which can then have a long term impact.

The relevance of regular and repeated experience in environmental education is highlighted by this study's 12 educators and by previous researchers (Peterson and Hungerford 1981; Horwitz 1996).

The Wildlife Trusts' should use centres as focal points or 'spring boards' to provide outdoor experiences for a range of age groups. Centres can also be used to address other aspects of educational work. They are not restricted to either formal or informal education nor to rural or urban Trusts. They may be used for The Trusts' provision of holiday experiences and fieldwork for families and/or children, as listed among community and schools education activities. Centres are a form of publicity for the Trusts, but not only for The Wildlife Trusts or one single Trust; centres could be used to promote visits to other Trusts and wildlife habitats around the country. Members can use centres for social contact with other members (Lowe and Goyder 1983) and centres have the potential to bring together volunteers for training providing them with a 'purpose' and value that they need (Powell 1997) as well as training. The status of education could be improved for the benefit of all personnel through development of centres owned, managed or run by every local Wildlife Trust. Centres do not have to be lavish facilities; children in particular can enjoy experiences in old and rudimentary buildings, yet both individual Trusts and visitors noted that essential sanitary facilities are important for all age groups.

Trusts that do use centres are aware of their potential for improvement in terms of their publicity; improving displays; developing events programmes and balancing centres' businesses and educational functions. Trusts are aware that some of their centres have been badly managed; their development has lacked community involvement and communication with outside partners and in some instances, centres' purposes have been unclear. Interviews with Trust personnel indicated that funding opportunities to create or develop centres have been missed. As with other areas of educational work, a nationally led funding strategy could tackle this problem.

7.2.7 Further/Higher education

Activities for FE and HE were found to be a lower priority for Trusts than other activities mentioned so far in this discussion.

Student placements were mentioned by only a minority of Wildlife Trusts. This study advises that student placements can provide the kind of experiences that other volunteer placements provide: an interest to work with or be influenced by The Trusts later in life. Student placements can offer Trusts resources of time and enthusiasm needed to deliver other educational activities, such as events and displays. Whilst Trusts consider that providing information to students about wildlife and environment is a time consuming process, it affords further opportunities to engage students in delivering Trust education. Additionally, contacts with the *local* student community can be forged; this would be lost if National Office were to be a central provider rather than supporter of delivering wildlife information to students.

The Wildlife Trusts' provision of qualifications, course and training to FE and HE students exists in a small number of individual Trusts only. The location of Trusts may mean that regional provision of activities for colleges and universities is an easier way to use Wildlife Trust resources and skills. There is potential for the partnership to look deeper into its own best practice and cases of other environmental education delivery in universities (Nicholas and Scott 1993). There is also potential for The Wildlife Trusts to redevelop the organisation's early university education practices (Huxley 1947), by using reserves more for student education.

Reasons for including and developing FE/HE work among Trust educational activities are threefold. Firstly, a body of research supports the view that studies at latter stages of formal education may form some of the most memorable experiences involved in PED development (Palmer 1998b; Palmer and Suggate 1996). FE/HE education may 're-fuel' or 'crystallise' pre-existing environmental interests and attitudes that were developed earlier in childhood (Caro et al 1994; Palmer 1993). In-depth interviews with educators in this study revealed this to be the case with their environmentally related studies. However, this may merely illustrate the situation for persons with pre-existing environmental interests. MORI (1987) surveys have demonstrated that as little as 3% of the public may be influenced by either schools *or* university in a similar way. This example either serves to demonstrate how necessary it is for environmental education to be developed within universities or it suggests that only people with existing environmental concern will be affected by this kind of formal education. However, providing learners with inspirational, influential people during their university education (Chawla 1999) may present a second reason for Wildlife Trust personnel to work with universities. A third reason lies in FE/HE institutions' negative or indifferent responses to the (1993) Toyne Report's recommendations for environmental teaching and management (DETR 1997). This situation highlights a potential niche for NGOs, as outside bodies, to assist with environmental teaching and auditing that may appear irrelevant and onerous to busy colleges and universities. It should be pointed out that this third area of work deviates from Trusts' best practices and would require considerable fresh development.

7.2.8 Work with young people

Work with young people fell into the smallest category of Trusts' reported educational activities. Whilst environmental education of the 1970s and 1980s was grounded in work with young people (Evans 1997), this study demonstrates that under one third of Trusts' work is with older children outside formal education or Wildlife Watch. The paucity of work with young people is also mirrored in the

interview responses about existing audiences for Trusts' education; just 3 out of 46 Trusts mentioned older children and/or young people. The Wildlife Trusts could and should be delivering more young people's activities and this fact is assertively stated in the education review Final Report (Palmer and Lancaster 1999). This study's interview responses concerned with ideal educational activities indicated that youths/teenagers and or undergraduates were ranked second, after schools as ideal audiences for future educational work. Even so, this ideal requirement was only voiced by a minority of Trusts.

Work with young people was reported to include work with 'uniform groups', youth work, Children for Change and other empowerment work. Uniform groups (such as Scouts) have already been mentioned in this discussion in terms of their suitability to be targeted groups for Watch activities; the 'ready-made' aspect of these groups mean that they may be reached more easily. The work which was described in this thesis as 'youth work' encompasses working with those often thought of as 'difficult group of people', for which the Trusts have limited expertise. However, there is environmental interest among young adults and sometimes it is the young people who approach the Trusts for educational and conservation experiences, rather than the other way round.

The Children for Change concept of work, encouraging empowerment and participation, is carried out by very few Trusts, yet educational work of this sort has been lauded by both environmental educational initiatives and research (IUCN 1970; UNCED 1992; Fien and Trainer 1993; Hart 1997; Warburton 1998a). Real and simulated decision-making exercises for young people could be developed by Trusts, involving conferences and engagement in local environmental projects. In such ways, The Wildlife Trusts can assist young individuals and groups of young people to develop confidence in their abilities to effect change and consequently this confidence or self-belief may influence young people's PED development (Sia et al 1985; Hines et al 1986/7). Where individual Trusts are undertaking this kind of work, either through Children for Change or through other empowerment work, there is a good case for sharing best practice or communicating across the partnership. Where some Trusts have difficulties in finding and contacting groups of young persons, others may have suggestions. As with Watch activities, schools can be a good starting place for engaging the interest of older children and for advertising the Trusts' work.

Activities for young people need not be restricted to political and conference room work. Evidence for the influence of outdoor activities upon adolescents or teenagers may be found in the work of Chawla (1999) and Peterson and Hungerford (1981). Palmer et al (1999) provide indication that there is potential for outdoor experiences to have greater effect on UK teenagers, given that similar age groups from other countries are influenced. The Wildlife Trusts themselves cited examples of work with this age group which were perceived to have positive effects on young people: a week-long event on a nature reserve and a week of environmental art events. These sorts of successes should be shared among Trusts.

The interpersonal relationships that may develop PEDs among young people provide the Trusts with additional reason for developing youth work. Teenagers can be inspirational for younger children, as explained by one of this study's 12 educators who was greatly influenced by a teenage neighbour. Similarly, older people can motivate younger generations and pass on environmental wisdoms (Kaplan 1990;

1991; Hart 1997). It appears that individual Trusts can offer expertise to enable wider engagement in this area of work across the whole partnership and reduce existing fears of youth work.

7.3 Strengths and weaknesses of The Wildlife Trusts' education provision

This study has identified that The Wildlife Trusts' provision of education has strong and weak elements, which can be used to identify future potentials and limits of the Trusts' education provision. Strengths were revealed through Trust personnel's views on best practice, and report of activities thought to have a significant impact upon people. The opinions of visitors and a public sample also illustrated favourable aspects of education provision. Interviews with Trust personnel revealed weaknesses and limitations associated with education provision; these were reported as areas of work that could be done better or that presented obstacles to Trust work. Additional data concerning weaknesses were obtained from questionnaires to the visitors, the public sample and the author's recorded field notes.

In discussing the Trusts' educational activities in section 7.2, it was appropriate to use the eight original categories or headings used in for analysis in Chapter 6. Here, it is not fitting to use categories used in Chapter 6 (and indeed in the education review Final Report (Palmer and Lancaster 1999)) to discuss the strengths and weaknesses for two reasons. Firstly, it is the case that that some of the Trusts' greatest strengths also underpin some of the organisation's weaknesses. Hence strengths and weaknesses should be discussed in conjunction with each other. Secondly, emergent dominant themes are clear when the strengths and weaknesses data are read in the light of literature review. The strengths and weaknesses are discussed here according to seven themes emergent from the data namely: Providing experiences in wildlife environments; Educating communities and educating locally; Attracting people to The Wildlife Trusts' education; Sustaining education: Members and volunteers; Educating young people including children; Empowering decisions and action; Managing The Wildlife Trusts' education.

The first theme to be discussed concerns providing experiences in wildlife environments.

7.3.1 Providing experiences in wildlife environments

Nature conservation is a clear strength of The Wildlife Trusts. Efforts in acquiring reserves, managing them, conserving habitats and recording wildlife are areas of work where individual Trusts and the whole partnership are thought to succeed. Historically, nature conservation forms the basis of The Wildlife Trusts' work and Trust personnel believe this to be best practice today. In its work on nature reserves, the organisation is responding to nature conservation as an international NGO; it responds to the EU Habitats Directive of 1992 (Council Directive 92/43 EEC); The Wildlife Trusts also continues to pursue its original SPNR goals, as recorded by Sheail (1998:5).

Outside views of the Trusts' nature conservation verify that it is a strong element of the Trusts' work and one that is appreciated. This study demonstrates that visitors enjoy Wildlife Trust reserves and sites for the opportunities they afford to experience

wildlife environments. The nature conservation sites are enjoyed where they are accessible, attractive and where knowledgeable and friendly staff are available. The Wildlife Trusts' sites are enjoyed where there are high quality facilities that enhance experiences of the wildlife and habitats, perhaps via visitor centres, which have the potential to impact upon wide varieties and numbers of people. Such strengths should inform future Wildlife Trust decisions about providing experiences for people. It should be noted here that this potential was reported as a key finding of the education review and the Final Report (Palmer and Lancaster 1999) proposes that the development of existing strengths becomes a major part of Wildlife Trust education strategy.

The Wildlife Trusts organisation possesses distinctive assets in its reserves and in its high-quality nature conservation. However, people's opportunities to experience them are limited. This study demonstrates that Trust personnel notice that:

> ...key members are thinking that reserves are for wildlife and not for people.

Outside views of the Trusts' activities suggest that *more people* should be able to experience reserves and education could be improved by addressing weak interpretation and educational facilities on Trust sites. There is real potential for the conservation-based assets to be used to promote wider promote public enjoyment and have a greater impact upon people.

In this study, Trust personnel ranked 'conservation and reserves' last among 13 categories of Trust activities thought to have significant impact upon people. It seems that The Wildlife Trusts partnership does not yet believe in its capabilities to use reserves use to have impact upon people, and is not entirely succeeding in making conservation relevant to people. Neither is the organisation using reserves sufficiently in its education work. Individual Trusts list their reserves open-access policies among their strengths, yet it is clear that this is not the case across the partnership. This study's list of best practices shows considerable variation of strengths *across the partnership*, and supports Dwyer and Hodges' (1996) notion that it remains in the hands of individual Trusts to determine how or if they use their wildlife sites for educational activities.

Provision of experiences in wildlife environments is potentially the most important aspect of The Wildlife Trusts' education. The category of activities named 'outdoor/wildlife experiences' is perceived, along with schools activities, to have a greater impact upon people than other activities. Two thirds of The Wildlife Trusts organisation believe that providing people with first hand experiences of wildlife, habitats and enabling them to discover outdoor environments is a key area of education that leaves an impression on people. The Wildlife Trusts' strength in reserves ownership and management means that such experiences are realisable. Some Trusts include ideas about Nature Reserves in their hopes for ideal educational practice. Although only a few Trust personnel believe that they can carry out more education at reserves and centres, their ideas epitomise the potential for The Wildlife Trusts to provide experiences in wildlife environments:

> Sites could be high profile, excellent education resources, accessible for school trips...really good schools' education resources and family places at weekends.

> ...we need commitment to *making use* of nature reserves – proving opportunities for people to realise the important of nature.

Where reserves are not owned or used by Trusts, perhaps in the case of urban Trusts, successful use of other wildlife sites including parks, churchyards or woodlands may be shared across the partnership.

There is a wealth of research supporting the notion that provision of outdoor, wildlife and nature-related experiences are key influences upon a person's interest in, concern for or action for the environment (Tanner 1980; Peterson and Hungerford 1981; Gunderson 1989; Palmer 1993; Palmer and Suggate 1996; Sward 1996; Chawla 1999). Such research is heavily supported by the findings of this study. 100% of the 12-person sample of educators reported outdoor experiences that had influenced their concern for wildlife. For these 12 Wildlife Trust educators, memorable outdoor experiences were more influential than other experiences including the influence of people, education and the media. One educator reported:

> ...from personal experience there is something about being around nature and wildlife and I felt it very strongly.

Even where formal education was memorable, it was the time spent in the school grounds or going out on fieldtrips that were thought to be most important.

The means for The Wildlife Trusts to provide such outdoor and wildlife experiences is limited by the aforementioned attitudes that wish to keep reserves for wildlife only. Such attitudes may be a legacy of the SPNR's early purpose for reserves (Evans 1997)

There are also obstacles associated with the organisation's weak funding strategies that, if improved, could make it possible for more people to experience the Trusts' wildlife reserves, centres and other sites. Within the Trusts' identified resource problems, resourcing of reserves-based education is over-shadowed by efforts to fund direct conservation and reserves acquisition. Without enabling resources to be used for opening up wildlife experiences to more people, The Wildlife Trust partnership faces a continued weakness and difficulty associated with its old 'stand-offish' image, which may in turn preclude the success of other work.

The Wildlife Trusts face problems associated with their roots in the nature conservation movement, the conservation personnel working within it and the associated conservation-language that may be perceived negatively by the public (Fazio and Gilbert 1981; Kennedy 1985; Juniper 1989). The following comments from Trust personnel and the author's field notes serve to illustrate:

> We haven't got a large skills base; it needs conservation to join in (educator).
>
> There is, at present, a feeling that all directors and managers are conservation specialists (educator).
>
> 'W'...feels that the conservation people are quite separate from her work and has no communication with them. 'W' said she had never seen the Conservation Plan (author's field notes).

There are additional difficulties in acquainting people with wildlife when there are problems in acquainting people with contemporary terms used by environmentalists:

Biodiversity and Sustainability. These are tasks of global importance presented to conservation NGOs after UNCED 1992 and associated global and national Government publications. The terms Biodiversity or Sustainability can be perceived as dull, confusing, complex or overly scientific in the minds of the public (Di-Silvestro 1993; Macnaghten et al 1995; UK Biodiversity Group 2001). The Wildlife Trusts may choose, as an NGO, to reject use of these terms in communicating with public groups. Alternatively, if The Wildlife Trusts intend to raise public awareness of such environmental issues, it seems that *first hand experiences* demonstrating the meaning and importance of Biodiversity and, perhaps to a less extent Sustainability, must be a key part of Trusts' educational work.

7.3.2 Educating communities and educating locally

The Wildlife Trusts' local education and/or community work is one of the organisation's key strengths. This aspect of work joins with nature conservation to be a clear *partnership* strength, whilst all other best practices were strengths assignable to individual Trusts or groups of Trusts. Wildlife Trust personnel identified community and locally focussed work as Wildlife Trust good practice and this is strengthened by the fact that community and local activities also form the largest proportion of Wildlife Trust education. Additionally, 'more people work' and 'community groups' were reported among the 5 highest ranking ideal activities/audiences for Wildlife Trust educational work. This suggests that there is clear potential for the Trusts to develop its existing strength in this field.

Trust personnel view this area of work to be one of the organisation's strengths, yet views from this study's external sample indicate that Wildlife Trust education should include *more* education of communities at local level. It is evident that the students in this study, who had little knowledge of the Trusts, highlighted themselves as a sector of the population that has clearly been untouched by The Wildlife Trusts in their own local and university communities.

There are various rationales for further strengthening The Wildlife Trusts' community and locally focussed education work. Firstly, it is evident that some Trusts are gaining *regular contact* with some audiences in their local communities. The importance of regular rather than one-off contact with nature is noted by Adams (1996:113) and Dettman-Easler and Pease (1999:39). The importance of 'gradual progression' and 'sequence' of influences in the lives of this study's education staff clarifies the need to provide repeated and ongoing experiences encouraging people to return for more wildlife experiences. The Trusts should note that returning to local centres of wildlife is much easier than experiencing national showcases.

Secondly, this study demonstrates that the importance of *local* environments is evident both in the minds of people with existing interest in conservation and those with less interest. This study's sample of education staff described experiences and memories of home and local wildlife that were influential upon their current concern. Environmental issues and concerns were often conceptualised in terms of local instances of damage to nature. The work of Palmer and Suggates (1996) and Sward (1996) supports this thesis' finding that local negative environmental issues can be memorable and influential.

People who are not necessarily involved in nature conservation or education may be influenced by local environmental education projects and may have affections for

their local environment (Warburton 1995; Macnaghten et al 1995; Hart 1997; Fagan 1998). Baines 1995:45) suggests that most people have an 'environmental horizon which is very local'. Globally-shaped initiatives such as the Biodiversity Action Plan (HMSO 1994) and Local agenda 21 (UNCED 1992) advocate public involvement in *local* environmental projects, as a means of addressing global-scale issues. The Wildlife Trusts, as a local NGO may be better placed to carry out these tasks than local government organisations, and certainly a local NGO has greater potential than a national or global NGO for building local relationships between people and between people and place.

The Wildlife Trusts' strengths and potential for developing local and community work are met by limiting factors. Local NGOs, according to Princen and Finger (1994:7), have less of a chance of permanence and durability than their national and global counterparts. Goodwin (1998) points out that local conservation initiatives may only attract those already interested in environmental issues. However, The Wildlife Trusts can still conduct locally focussed work under the umbrella of national coordination and national publicity provided by The Wildlife Trusts' National Office – a point illustrated in the education review's Final Report (Palmer and Lancaster 1999). The Wildlife Trusts, with its local Trusts, its national office and national image is a distinctive organisation among other NGOs (Barkham 1989:12). If it can overcome an externally 'nationally disparate image' (Juniper 1989:11) and if individual Trusts can overcome their fears that a national Wildlife Trusts organisation dilutes the efforts of local Trusts, then national image, coordination and support may enable it to have 'the best of both worlds'.

7.3.3 Attracting people to The Wildlife Trusts' education

This theme concerns The Wildlife Trusts' efforts to publicise themselves and present an appealing image to the public. This is predominantly a weak area of the Trusts' education work but it has potential for improvement. Over half the Trusts in this study reported The Wildlife Trusts' image as a weakness. Image problems include: unsuccessful efforts to make initial connections with people; possessiveness over Wildlife Trusts image at the expense of partnership with outside bodies; perceptions that the public see the Trusts' image as elitist. Certainly an elitist image existed in the past as Wildlife Trusts presented themselves as conservationists with a 'middle class and tweedy' image (Adams 1996:67).

Public views revealed in this study note residual weaknesses in the Trusts' ability to make contact with more people, especially those without existing interest in conservation. The authors' field notes made during Trust visits included observations of immense disparity in the appearance of Trusts buildings, the signage to Trust offices and reserves and the sometimes-unfriendly initial conversations with Trust personnel. All these negative elements of the Trusts' image are hindrances to the process of attracting people to The Wildlife Trusts and the education the organisation can offer. This study leads the author to challenge the concerns of Potter and Adams (1993) who wish to protect conservation from being a consumer product. Clearly The Wildlife Trusts cannot ignore the need to improve how it promotes and markets itself to 'outsiders' and members of the public.

It is suggested that those Trusts with 'media and image' work among their individual strengths should share their successes across the partnership. The National Office could engage further resources in raising the partnership's national image and centres

and reserves could be developed to become better known to more people. This study supports the idea that environmental education should be focussed on local issues and neighbourhoods where people feel they can take part and make a difference (Geller 1995; Baines 1995; HMSO 1995; Sward 1996). Campaigns should be accordingly organised so that they are nationally publicised and coordinated and yet have local participatory elements suggested by so many previous authors and studies including The Wildlife Trusts' education review.

Attracting more people to become aware of conservation, to experience wildlife at first hand and to participate in conservation initiatives is potential education work for the Trusts to develop, for the very reason that The Wildlife Trusts want to develop this area of work. This study's interview questions about defining education, its audiences and its ideals all included categories related to 'wide audiences', broadening the way education is defined within the Trusts and targeting new groups of people in local and visiting communities.

The desire to expand education is hindered by difficulties in breaking links with historically narrow audiences for conservation groups: the middle classes (Hart 1997) and select groups of academics (McNeely 1997). However, in engaging with more people, the Trusts are seeking to transform the status quo and fulfil the specific role of an NGO working in a more post-modern context (Finger 1997). Thus the Trusts must address the groups of people that they know have been neglected in past educational work: youth groups, disabled people, pre-school children, parents and over 50s. Gaining interest from and knowledge about previously neglected audiences is a task for The Wildlife Trusts in both its national and local capacities, if the organisation to successfully attract more people to educational activities (Juniper 1988; Arcury and Christianson 1990).

There are additional challenges for the Trusts to develop this aspect of education. For instance, this thesis found that where Trusts feel that education activities and audiences could be broadened, there are equal numbers of Trusts who see the need to narrow down and focus. Undoubtedly, there are problems associated with employing many activities to attract many different people to their work whilst still maintaining the clear functions that Smith (1990) identified to be so important for The Wildlife Trusts. This is still possible if The Wildlife Trusts seek to define and then reduce those activities better performed by other NGOs and bodies involved in environmental education, as suggested by Micklewright (1993), then the Trusts must build on their own strengths.

7.3.4 Sustaining education: members and volunteers

Members and volunteers are distinctive groups of people who have already been attracted to The Wildlife Trusts, yet may be forgotten because they are 'recruited' and involved. Membership and volunteer involvement should be sustained and improved upon. This is, firstly, because it is a weak area of The Wildlife Trusts' work. Secondly, there is potential for enriching the experiences of these distinctive audiences. Thirdly, sustaining the flow of members and volunteers into the Trusts is important financially for the Trusts but also for the education of other people that members and volunteers may influence. Members, as those people with existing interest in wildlife, are important audiences for The Wildlife Trusts. As Gray (1993) implies, they can form an essential link with other public groups.

Volunteers' involvement in Trusts and the Trusts' good relationships with volunteers were aspects of best practice mentioned by very few Trusts in this study. It seems that Powell's (1997) account of problems experienced by volunteers – their feelings of under-use, helplessness and lack of structure in their work – may all be present in The Wildlife Trusts. Across this study's interviews, volunteers were recognised and reported as people involved in delivering education activities but their work is rarely highly valued. Trusts specifically reported that volunteers either hinder or are not used fully enough in education work. Further examination of volunteers' views is an important area for the Trusts to review internally. Considering that resource and staff limitations are problems for large numbers of Trusts, volunteers are especially valuable.

Even though volunteers may not replace fully trained, motivated and paid full time members of staff, well-trained and valued volunteers are can be of great assistance:

> Without volunteers, we could not run the schools programme. Volunteers keep our groups down to 10 children, maximum (education manager).

Some Trusts' volunteers exemplify unique and creative practice within environmental education, such as those volunteers who set up wildlife holidays programmes. Trusts that employ such volunteers should share their ideas and experiences across the Wildlife Trust partnership.

Members, like volunteers are among the people with whom the Trusts most frequently communicate. However, like volunteers, members are not always at the heart of the strongest aspects of the Trusts' educational work. Few Trusts reported their membership to be one of The Wildlife Trusts' strengths. Only 2 out of 46 Trusts mentioned membership when discussing ideals for education practice.

The Trusts' potential for continuing to attract and maintain members should be recognised in conjunction with Junipers' (1988) research that indicates how potential members are attracted by the 'club' element of The Wildlife Trusts. Active membership is thought to be preferable to membership confined to passive receipt of magazines and occasional lectures. Reflection is needed to re-examine the interest and value of activities provided for members, such as walks and talks, and to consider whether these would attract new members.

The Wildlife Trusts' early goals of maintaining an elite and original membership (Yearly 1991) are clearly not current goals yet this may become unintentional consequence of membership protocol. Thought should be given to the obstacles presented by some members who hinder educational practices; if trustees' impede effective development of educational strengths, then new plans need to be made to limit trustees' terms of service. This Discussion chapter has already demonstrated that older children and young adults should be encouraged to become Wildlife Trust members, taking part in appropriate activities and this suggestion is restated here.

7.3.5 Educating young people including children

The education activities provided by The Wildlife Trusts for young people have already been discussed in this Discussion chapter in many of the sections in 7.2. Here, strengths and weaknesses of this area of work are focussed upon. Although many Trusts participate in working with schools and hope to expand its practice, it is

evidently not an area of educational work that is viewed as partnership best practice. Only education personnel referred to schools work as strengths; the directors' lack of comments concerning this area of education verifies that schools education needs a great deal more support and interest from directors.

The Trusts, as a partnership believe that schools work has greater impact upon people than any other education activity, except for outdoor experiences. This demonstrates that the Trusts believe they have the potential to develop this aspect of education for young people; the work of Hart (1997) and Palmer and Neal (1994) confirm that there are good examples of Wildlife Trusts' successful school education.

External views of the Trusts are positive where education resources for young people are of good quality and equally Trusts are criticised where their schools resources are poor or where Trusts do not work sufficiently with schools. This research demonstrates that these strengths and weaknesses are products of the unequal resources and efforts that individual Trusts employ in this area of education.

Wildlife Trust personnel believe that their informal education is stronger than their formal activities provision. However, informal education activities are usually only strengths in individual Trusts, rather than across the whole partnership. Informal education experiences for young people, such as those provided through use of centres, conferences, play schemes, access to reserves, wildlife holidays and Watch clubs are activities considered to be sound. The combination of informal education and Watch were named by Trust personnel to be the third ranking set of activities and is thought to have significant impact upon people. Continuation of National Office's strong support for Watch materials is likely to maintain Watch as one of the strongest elements of Trust education; yet each Trust should be enabled to use Watch as an active club and sustain teenagers' interest in Trust activities upon their 'graduation' from Watch.

On one hand this study notes that the Trusts can develop their existing strengths in delivering informal education. On the other hand the weaker aspects, such as education for the youth sector, could be addressed by providing more outdoor and empowering experiences for teenagers; The Wildlife Trusts first need to explore means of reducing Trusts' negative perceptions about the difficulties this age group presents.

In developing the potential of youth education, The Wildlife Trusts should bear in mind the negligible impact they and formal education had upon their own educators, who all reported more memorable experiences associated with outdoor experiences and people unconnected with school. One issue that might influence the Trusts' future work with young people is the fact that The Wildlife Trusts, as an NGO, are likely to have greater control over planning and delivering informal education activities than activities in formal education institutions.

7.3.6 Empowering decisions and action

The education work that involves empowering decisions and action among others is closely connected to activities for local communities, young people, members and volunteers. The Wildlife Trusts' strength in this area of work lies in the fact that the organisation is well placed to develop it. The Wildlife Trusts are clearly keen to

further this aspect of education since 'empowerment' is so frequently mentioned in The Trusts' definitions and meanings of education and education activities that empower are thought to have a significant impact upon people.

The potential impact of educating for empowerment and providing skills for environmental decision-making and action is considerable (Sia et al 1985; Hines et al 1986/7; Geller 1995). Having knowledge of strategies for environmental action is likely to influence people's environmental behaviour hence environmental education strategies should empower people accordingly (WCED 1987; Fien and Trainer 1993; Palmer and Neal 1994; Adams 1996; Hart 1997). The 12 educators interviewed in this study discussed their concern for wildlife in terms of responsibility and anguish about damage of the environment. Given this finding, it may be presupposed that other people in the Trusts' sphere of education work might have comparable concerns and so providing the 'how to' experiences and knowledge as part of environmental education are especially important for engaging public non-conservationists in conservation thinking and practice. The need for The Wildlife Trusts, as an NGO, to include empowerment work in its community and local education roles is quite certain (Martin 1996; Warburton 1998a).

The Wildlife Trusts' work with schools could, by similar line of thinking, include empowerment and decision-making that is recommended in the 1999 National Curriculum's Education for Sustainability. However, the NGO position of The Wildlife Trusts means that young people should be empowered to question environmental decision makers and authorities, if the Trusts are to educate critically in the manner proposed by Fay (1987); Fien (1993) and Martin (1996).

The Wildlife Trusts efforts to empower decisions and actions are relevant for communicating with the 'decision makers' themselves on several accounts. Firstly, Trusts' opinions about ideal forms of education include reference to influencing both conservation and education policy. Secondly, utilising partnerships with local authorities and influencing decision makers rank within the Trusts' top 10 best practices. Such areas of work include campaigning, lobbying and persuading Governments to make positive decisions about wildlife and conservation. The Wildlife Trusts view that they have strengths in political aspects of communication work with Government at national and local level and with industries, businesses, farmers and landowners. The 'decision makers' represent distinct audiences in both the impacts they have upon the environment and in the style of communication required to encourage positive environmental decision-making.

To suggest that such groups have economic aims at the heart of their decisions does not mean that these groups fall outside the remit of education provided by The Wildlife Trusts' as an NGO. Rather, successes in individual Trusts should be shared, modes of communication should be developed (Gray 1993) and, as emphasised in the education review's Final Report (Palmer and Lancaster 1999), central coordination should be set up to develop this work, especially where decision-making is at a national level. Evidence of successful cooperation between The Wildlife Trusts and the business sector is provided by Potts (1998). Yearly (1991) states that the Trusts historically have enjoyed easily relations with statutory bodies as well as voluntary ones. This study reinforces the fact that individual Trusts can be very successful in targeting and empowering these decision-makers and there is potential for this to be carried into national educational strategy for The Wildlife Trusts.

7.3.7 Managing The Wildlife Trusts' education

The greatest weakness of The Wildlife Trusts' education lies not in the education activities themselves but in the *ways* that they are planned and provided. This problem is inevitably an obstacle to developing educational activities that are either strong or needing improvement. Nearly all Trusts, including National Office reported flaws in terms of The Wildlife Trusts' education management, organisation and resourcing. Other obstacles and means for improving education relate to approaches and strategies for delivering education, such as negative attitudes towards education work within the Trusts and lack of communication between different groups of Trust personnel. Additional weaknesses include the Trusts' difficulties in identifying appropriate foci for education work. Outside views of the Trusts' weaknesses highlight that The Wildlife Trusts could be doing more education and could use personnel, reserves and other resources more effectively for education.

Historically, The Wildlife Trusts have an identity as a set of individual County Trusts that have forged their own education agendas. This is reflected in the author's thesis findings and in the review findings. Many of the Trusts' reported that strengths of educational provision are strengths of individual Trusts only; they don't extend across the partnership. This approach to The Wildlife Trusts' education provision means that individual Trusts compete against each other for resources and duplicate effort. Consequently, previous years' inter-Trust competition, and tension, identified by Barkham (1989) and Yearly (1991), is continued into current work. Whereas in the past, individual Trusts' identities were more important for Trusts than a united image and cross-partnership educational strategy (Bull 1986; Smith 1990), this study confirms that Trusts, at least in theory, favour a new unified approach that may be the source of stronger educational provision.

The Trusts identify the need for greater coordination of education work and more centrally supported strategy, as this member of Trust staff illustrates:

> The main problem for environmental education, for the environmental movement rather, historically has been the very unprofessional, unstructured approach to communication with the public.

There is clearly a place for enhanced collaboration across the Trusts and use of National Office to facilitate and guide such practice. This calls for strong leadership to identify education strategy for the whole partnership, to demand more communication between Trusts and to ensure that ample resources including staff and volunteers can be enabled to run successful educational activities throughout the country. The importance of strong leadership in education has been critical in the past (Barkham 1989; Lowe and Goyder 1983; Micklewright 1986; Dwyer and Hodge 1996). Leadership continues to remain pertinent today.

The roles for those undertaking to lead Wildlife Trust education work include designing a strategy with the support of all Trusts yet without supposition that all Trusts should or could deliver the same educational activities. Individual Trusts have differences in: their level of reserve ownership/management; the age and distribution of their local populations and the environmental issues that confront the Trust. Smaller under-resourced Trusts require extra support from National Office in order to provide an appropriate level of educational work. Merely strengthening one type of Wildlife Trust, be it rural, urban, well established, new, small or large will only

serve to limit goals to reach wide audiences and become well known throughout the UK. Typologies of Trusts, such as those devised by Dwyer and Hodge (1996,) are imperfect but may present a basis for addressing inequalities amongst Trusts and their aptitude to provide selected education activities.

This research revealed that Trust personnel do not view the distinct *partnership* characteristic of The Wildlife Trusts to be an asset. Only 2 out of 46 Trusts viewed working as part of The Wildlife Trust partnership as a strength. This study upholds the idea that competition between - or within - environmental groups prevails over collaboration. This idea re-appears in the education review Final Report (Palmer and Lancaster 1999) and throughout many works documenting conservation history and environmental NGOs (Lowe and Goyder 1983; Smith 1990; Yearly 1991; Potter and Adams 1993; Dwyer and Hodge 1996; Martin 1996; Evans 1997).

Whilst it appears that The Trusts function as a collection of local organisations with a local element, there is merit in taking an approach as a National NGO with distinctive but unified local parts as touched upon by Barkham (1989). This does not naturally entail transferring all decision-making powers to a separate National Office, but rather the National Office or a 'Partnership Centre' could tap into individual Trusts' strengths and leaders. Managing The Wildlife Trusts' education work should not overlook the fact that they have an almost unique strength: they are very well placed to respond to the need for NGOs to work at a local level (Princen and Finger:1994).

Resourcing education provision is a current problem for The Wildlife Trusts. The Wildlife Trusts have limited their potential to impact upon people by focussing their fund-raising capacities on conservation projects, thus supporting Adams' (1996) anticipation that Biodiversity issues direct money away from community projects. Nevertheless it is worth pointing out that The Wildlife Trusts' concern with Biodiversity is one of the organisation's few instruments for engaging with global environmental issues and doing so in partnership with other NGOs. A more considered balance between and integration of biodiversity conservation and people work should be a priority for The Wildlife Trusts' educational strategy.

Past accounts of the Trusts' long-term funding problems (Dwyer and Hodge 1996) are emulated in this study's data. This study clearly demonstrates that education is seen as under-resourced and understaffed. In order to address the issue of under-staffed education, funds need to be created to secure long term education posts in The Wildlife Trusts where staff involved in education are given the status and pay that reflects their colleagues in conservation and conservation management. Funding for improving public use and image of centres, buildings and reserves should be a key part of educational strategy. Fundraising may best be accomplished by skilled fundraisers based in National Office and perhaps at regional level; this suggestion is shared by this thesis and the findings of the education review. The fundraisers could be shared by local Trusts and should utilise and develop the many partnerships discovered within this study and, where appropriate, for regional as well as local direction of funds. Whilst The Wildlife Trusts rely upon Government funded initiatives they may remain attached to project-tied funding that limits their autonomy as an NGO (Lowe and Goyder 1983). This in turn may advance the Trusts' status as an 'appeal to the elites' conservation organisation (Martin 1984) and reduces a more Pluralist NGO approach that involves wider sectors of society (Doyle and McEachern 1998).

A notable set of obstacles to education provision fits into a category that this study identifies as 'political and external'. The Wildlife Trusts' work is clearly challenged by Government policy, both in education and in conservation. Within this study's interviews and literature review, Trusts rarely refer to themselves either as separate NGOs or a combined 'Wildlife Trust NGO'; one member of education staff had never heard the term NGO. Nevertheless the obstacles that Trust personnel perceive to emanate from Government call for the Trusts to determine and present, more clearly, their NGO status. The Wildlife Trusts organisation needs to decide how it should develop its existing strengths in communicating with governmental decision makers and build upon past links with UK Government (Bull 1986; Sheail 1993; Adams 1996). The Trusts should bear in mind their experiences of sometimes-fickle Government interest in nature reserves and funding of conservation volunteer placements. Overall, the Trusts' past preference for working with the NGOS or the voluntary sector (Smith 1990) seems to be echoed today and this sentiment should be apparent within The Wildlife Trusts' educational strategy.

A final aspect of discussion here in 7.3.7 concerns Trusts' tension between focussing on a narrow set of education activities/audiences and broadening their educational remit. This study suggests that it is possible to fulfil the Trusts' ideal education provision of wide activities for many people yet also exhibit focussed Wildlife Trust education. This can be done via an educational strategy that focuses upon providing activities that are 'tailored' to local Trusts' various communities, echoing the suggestions of Arbuthnot (1977) and Juniper (1989) of tailored education or communication programmes.

The paradox of the 'broad focus' can be achieved by basing activities for wide audiences upon the longstanding key strengths of The Wildlife Trusts' education provision, that is to say: providing experiences in wildlife environments; engaging local communities in reacting to local environmental issues and operating Watch as a children's club. Additionally the Trusts should steadily develop their emerging abilities to empower young people to make decisions that are beneficial for wildlife and the environment.

7.4 The Educational Culture within The Wildlife Trusts

This thesis has defined the educational culture of The Wildlife Trusts as the ethos behind the organisation's conduct of education and 'a complex of social customs, values and expectations' (Frow and Morris 2000:315) that impact upon The Wildlife Trusts' delivery of education.

This study examined educational culture from 3 viewpoints: firstly the differing understandings of the concept of 'education' held by the large sample of Wildlife Trust personnel who were interviewed. Secondly, 'ideals for education' were sought; Wildlife Trust personnel were asked what they would do with a 'blank slate' for the organisation's provision of education. Thirdly, aspects of educational culture were revealed through in-depth interviews with 12 education staff, which investigated factors influencing the development of the staff's experiences and concerns about wildlife and the environment.

Its is clear from the findings presented in Chapter 6 that there are three dominant themes which characterise the Trusts' educational culture. These themes concern:

Ambiguous and negative meanings of education, the **Importance of people** and the **Value of environmental experience and affective response**.

Where possible, the themes are discussed within the context of wider literature. However, literature reviewed for this study is not equally relevant to each of the three themes. It is worth noting the paucity of literature that highlights ambiguous and negative meanings of education held by those involved in environmental education. Previous studies and historical accounts have so far overlooked issues concerned with how 'education' is conceptualised by environmental NGOs. It seems that apart from a body of 1980s North American literature (Todd 1980; Fazio and Gilbert 1981; Brown and Decker 1982; Gray 1993; Kennedy 1985; Lautenschlager and Bowyer 1985) this study is one of the first to expose the existence and import of a cultural split concerning views of environmental education held by educationalists and others.

7.4.1 Ambiguous and negative meanings of education

The nature and purpose of The Wildlife Trusts' education has changed since the SPNR aimed to 'encourage the love of nature and...educate public opinion to a better knowledge of nature study' (Sheail 1998:5). Trusts no longer place emphasis upon nature study. To a large extent The Wildlife Trusts have replaced the word education with 'raising awareness'. Many Trusts now see raising awareness a to be at the heart of their work with people, which includes changing attitudes and prejudices about wildlife and the environment; helping people become aware of conservation issues and encouraging people to notice the range of The Wildlife Trusts' work. These meanings of education are not ambiguous; they are clear and widely held among Trust personnel. Such an ethos of education corresponds with the Trusts' wish for education to be available for numerous and diverse audiences and at all stages of their lives. Education that means working with *all people* may be a more valuable part of the Trusts' educational culture than the misconceived view that education means all Trust work. Herein lies one ambiguity.

Some Trust personnel, directors in particular, view that education occupies a place within all other aspects of Trust work including conservation and marketing. Thus education is viewed to be a thread of work in all that the Trusts do. As one director commented:

> Education is everything and everything is education. The word education is a semantic - we ignore it and get on with it.

There are Trusts that are ardently opposed to education that might mean only schools work, Watch or other work with young people. There are also Trust educators who believe that their directors and trustees attempt to limit education to schools work, Watch or Young people. One director conveyed his hopes that education might discount young people and instead target those people:

> ...whose actions and influence have impact - good and bad. The kids are not the ones who vote.

Although some Wildlife Trusts presented views that education pervades all Trust activities, external audiences sampled for this study did not agree. Rather, the educational function is presumed to be far less important to the Trusts in comparison

with the conservation function. Claims that education runs through all Wildlife Trust work are also contradicted by plans for education as a separate element within the Trust's Conservation Plan entitled 'Making Biodiversity Relevant to People'. This kind of planning separates people work or education work from the other six strands of conservation work and political campaigning. The separateness between education and other work is apparent in interviews with educators some of whom had never seen the Conservation Plan; other personnel saw education as a 'tag-on' to conservation work. Although The Wildlife Trusts' education culture was not investigated as part of the education review, the Final Report (Palmer and Lancaster 1999) does highlight the problematic separation between education and conservation work.

During interviews, educators reported instances where other staff avoided involvement in education, where conservation personnel are not involved and where education is separate from marketing. Directors often displayed a disconnection from education, suggesting that they could not understand it, it was 'fluffy', or it was hard to discuss without being an educationalist. There is no clear and united understanding of the meaning or place of education alongside other areas of Trusts' work, yet there is an obvious culture of uncertainty. When Trusts were asked how they would wish to see education defined, many responses criticised the Trusts' use of the word 'education', declaring it to be an unfavourable description of the breadth of work that raises awareness among different public groups. The dissatisfaction with the word education was also apparent in the job titles that are used by education personnel. Among the 12 educators interviewed for the culture element of this study, one third omitted the word 'education' from their titles.

Trust personnel rarely mentioned the word 'Biodiversity' or its relevance to people throughout the entire study, despite education work being represented in Wildlife Trust working documentation as 'Making Biodiversity Relevant to People'. The only instances were: a response that indicated promoting Biodiversity because it was 'good for people'; an educator's hopes for including Biodiversity education in Watch work; an educator's attitude of respect for Biodiversity and a suggestion for a team of Wildlife Trust people to specifically make Biodiversity relevant to people. References to Sustainability, as another global theme in environmental education, were even fewer. The Trusts' education culture does not involve an overt concept of 'education for Sustainability' in the minds of the Trust personnel, hence it is argued here that The Wildlife Trusts continue, for the time being, to focus upon delivering 'environmental education' rather than 'education for Sustainability'. The hopes that the WCED (1987) report placed in Sustainable Development becoming a new means for public action and environmental decision-making are not manifest within aims of The Wildlife Trusts' education; nevertheless the Trusts may be thought to be behaving as an NGO, wisely evading the 'economically-focussed' concept of Sustainability (Doyle and McEachern 1998).

7.4.2 The importance of people

The interviews with the sample of 12 education staff present a second dominant aspect of the Trusts' educational culture. Specifically, the educators illustrated the how people have influenced their concern for wildlife and how people are significant within their current work with The Wildlife Trusts.

Memorable life experiences, recalled by the sample of educators, included a category of 'people', ranking fourth after 'outdoor experiences', 'home', 'affective response' categories. Again, the 'people' category ranked high among the educators' *most* memorable experiences. Teachers, parents, friends, a teenage neighbour, an NGO children's club leader were all cited as important influential people for the educators. Such reports demonstrate support for the theories of many previous authors who all posit that the influence of particular people can assist PED development (Tanner 1980; Palmer 1993; Votaw 1983; Peterson and Hungerford 1981; Kidd and Kidd 1997; Palmer et al 1999). For The Wildlife Trusts, this means two things.

Firstly, education activities should be planned to make the most of the communication skills of all Trust staff and volunteers including those Trust personnel traditionally 'outside education' who are potentially influential upon the public. People on Wildlife Trust sites, in centres and those involved in running clubs seem to play a more important role than written educational material or interpretation boards. Secondly, all affiliates of The Wildlife Trusts have the potential to become 'influential people' able to 'spread the word' to others (Gray 1993). Community activities could succeed in developing such valuable interpersonal relationships. In both cases, it is clear that NGOs, as Chawla (1999) suggests, are in a position to provide the role models, the sense of 'society', 'belongingness' and support that might be valuable to encourage action.

People feature as the most frequently named 'environmental issue' for this study's 12 educators. It is people's ignorance of wildlife and environment that forms the educators' greatest environmental concern for the UK's wildlife. For The Wildlife Trusts as a whole, protection of wildlife species and habitats is the key issue for concern. But the educational culture is one of people, where people present the problem and the solution. The educators of the Trusts clearly see that a great threat to wildlife environments is people's disconnection with nature and their lack of wildlife experiences. These problems are, in turn, concerns for people whose quality of life is reduced as a result. If educational strategy is to develop activities that fully appeal to people, then it needs to place people even nearer the heart of The Wildlife Trusts' ethos.

The importance of people, in this study, continued in educators' statements about what it means to be concerned about wildlife and in reasons for their work with The Wildlife Trusts. Helping people to experience nature and wildlife, and to experience a higher quality and healthier life via nature were reported among the 'concerns' of the Trusts' educators. Half of the sample of educators was attracted to Wildlife Trust jobs for their broad and people-focussed roles.

Other authors who have noticed the desire to help people among those who possess a PED include Dunlap et al (1983); De Young (1986); Granzin and Olsen (1991); Gigliotti and Decker (1992). This does not merely demonstrate that there is a special personality trait among prospective environmentalists and that the Trusts could develop such a trait. Rather, the value of this aspect of the Trusts' educational culture is in encouraging The Wildlife Trusts' to promote itself as an organisation that is interested in helping people. The Trusts may attract new members, new Trust staff and volunteers if 'helping people' is highlighted as a key part the Trusts' work. In this way, the positive feelings associated with helping other people may provide part of the reward sought for engaging in environmental action, as proposed by Constanzo et al (1986).

A less positive aspect of The Wildlife Trusts' educational culture is characterised by instances where work focussing upon people has low status and support for education staff is low. This is evident where: individual Trusts direct little or no resources towards educational work; where temporary education staff are not thought to represent Trusts' education work and where Trusts note the need for a 'stronger national voice' for education. Low salaries for education staff and short-term appointments also characterise a negative educational culture. There is a need for education personnel to be working at senior management level given that where educators are also managers, education is 'taken seriously' and others involved in educational activities feel motivated.

Education staff, as represented by this study's sample, are highly educated and well qualified. Qualifications are held in subjects concerned with conservation and environmental science more often than in people-centred subjects. Educators are well versed in matters of conservation, whereas other Trust personnel are less comfortable with matters of education and people. For example, more responses that indicated difficulty in judging the impact of the Trusts' work came from directors; similarly, conservation personnel were described as:

> ...good at education...but they wouldn't see it as education and wouldn't like to.

Separation between educators' work and others' work exists alongside a culture of lack of communication between people throughout individual Trusts and the partnership.

The Wildlife Trusts retain some of the traditional barriers that are thought to exist between the conservation culture and the communication-with-people culture highlighted by authors such as Fazio and Gilbert (1981); Kennedy (1985); Lautenschlager and Boyer (1985) and Gray (1993). These internally created barriers correspond to the impediments of NGO internal organisation that are raised by McCoy and McCully (1993) and Doyle and McEachern (1998). Such internal barriers are likely to impact more greatly than external obstacles upon The Wildlife Trusts' success as an NGO.

7.4.3 The value of experience and affective response

The importance of outdoor experiences to the sample of educators in this study indicates a Wildlife Trust educational culture that values *experiences* in the process of developing concern about wildlife and the environment. Experiences of wildlife and the outdoors also featured among reported memories of formal education and in some accounts of NGOs' influences. NGOs – in particular the RSPB and other bird organisations – gave this study's educators memorable and influential experiences in the form of bird watching and competitions, garden bird surveys, outdoor experiences and opportunities for physical labour. Certainly, NGOs also provided the educators with inspirational politics, information on global issues, knowledge and interpersonal relationships.

11 out of 12 of this study's educators grew up with access to natural areas, through childhood residency in rural or suburban areas. This suggests that the value of contact with nature may be embedded in the Trust' educational culture through the educators' early experiences. Core interviews with Wildlife Trust personnel revealed

that some Trusts believe that education should ideally use nature reserves for people. More than half the Trusts understand education to mean 'experience' and Trusts recognises the merit in:

> ...giving enjoyable experiences – having wonderful times in outdoor environments. Intellectual understanding is not enough.

Findings of this study do not dispute that sound knowledge is needed to thwart misunderstandings of environmental and conservation issues, especially among children (Palmer, Suggate and Matthews 1996). However, this thesis' findings support the idea that knowledge alone is not sufficient for PED development (Borden and Schettino 1979; Hines et al 1986/7).

The Trusts' educational culture is characterised by educators' reports of affective (emotional) responses that embody both current concern for wildlife and memorable influential experiences of the past. The most common categories of concern for wildlife included feelings of responsibility for the environment, concern about damage to the environment and sensations of spiritual connection with nature or enhanced quality of life bestowed by nature upon humans. These expressions of concern for wildlife are clearly affective and potentially analogous to Chawla's (1998:18) notion of environmental empathy viz.

> A predisposition to take an interest in learning about the environment, feeling a concern for it, and acting to conserve it on the basis of formative experiences.

If Trust personnel can be considered to be successful 'end products' of valuable education, experiences and influences, then their affective responses should potentially become goals for The Wildlife Trusts' education programmes. However, feelings such as responsibility should not be explored or promoted without presenting people with what Axelrod and Lehman (1993) describe as 'efficacy factors' or knowledge and skills for acting in response to feelings and attitudes. Neither should such educational goals be sought through control of cognitive and affective elements of a PED in the positivist paradigm of behavioural management (Palmer 1998).

The Wildlife Trusts have potential to draw on affective experiences that are discernible among their own education staff as well as within a sizeable body of prior research. Palmer (1998a; 1998b) has documented the significance of affective responses and spiritual ties to the environment in her own studies among undergraduates and environmental educators. Stimulating affective responses, as a part of environmental education, may encourage people to seek environmental knowledge (Borden and Schettino 1979). The spiritual elements of environmental experiences are proposed by Juniper (1989) and Di-Silvestro (1993) to be 'selling points' of the conservation movement and means for insight into the worth of Biodiversity. According to Todd (1980), conservationists should allow for greater spiritual and emotional interest in wildlife and the author posits that this is idea is highly applicable to The Wildlife Trusts.

This study's educators connected affective interests in wildlife with quality of life. Beyond this thesis, other enquiry has found that those interested in nature sense that it enhances their quality of life (MORI 1987). In undertaking to communicate the connection between environment and human quality of life, The Wildlife Trusts

address Government aims for Sustainable Development, which include reference to 'Quality of Life' as one of seven interrelated concepts. In 'A Better Quality of Life - A Strategy for Sustainable Development for the UK' (DETR 1999) the Government places itself at the forefront of promoting Sustainability. Bate (1993) however proposes that NGOs are better placed to carry out this task. Certainly there may be an NGO role for the Trusts to demonstrate improved quality of human life through wildlife conservation and via offering direct experience of nature. This is may be an apposite means for The Wildlife Trusts to deliver environmental education as an NGO, yet retain a certain degree of partnership with Government.

7.5 Conclusions

So far this chapter has discussed the three main aspects of The Wildlife Trusts' work that have been researched in this study. The Conclusions present the study's central themes that directly answer the two core research questions. After presenting such conclusions, this section then outlines the major limitations of the study and presents suggestions for further research.

7.5.1 What does The Wildlife Trusts, as a UK NGO, do in its delivery of environmental education?

To a large extent, The Wildlife Trusts' environmental education is definable by those who they educate. Their key audiences include members of local Trusts' communities and already-formed community groups and interest groups. Education is provided for young people – usually before adolescence – sometimes via the children's club Wildlife Watch and sometimes via formal school education. Key adults targeted by the Trusts include decision makers such as farmers, landowners, Government agencies at both national and local level, existing members and volunteers. In reaching and maintaining members, The Wildlife Trusts face competition with other NGOs trying to increase their membership numbers. The Trusts also compete with other NGOs for resources in educating other key audiences.

The Wildlife Trusts' education provision is characterised by a greatly diverse, yet also incoherent set of activities across the partnership. The diversity and range of activities is thought to be beneficial to an NGO, in order for it to achieve its aims (Princen and Finger 1994). The activities carried out can be grouped into various categories or stages which may overlap: a) attracting people to conservation and the work of The Wildlife Trusts via publicity; b) raising people's awareness about wildlife, conservation and environmental issues; c) providing direct experiences of wildlife environments and other means for experiencing nature; d) providing knowledge and information – in informal and formal education settings – about wildlife and associated issues; e) empowerment, effecting decision-making, political engagement or change of lifestyle in favour of the environment.

Much of The Wildlife Trusts' education has a local emphasis; this is a distinctive feature of The Wildlife Trusts as an NGO and is a particular strength of the partnership. The Trusts provide opportunities for people to experience local wildlife sites and reserves and for people to be part of local community projects and events. As stated within the conclusions of the education review's Final Report (Palmer and Lancaster 1999), the Trusts' knowledge of local environments – rural and urban – offers people opportunities to take part in building and sharing this knowledge as

well as closely interacting with local places. These opportunities are more typically offered to people who have existing interests in wildlife and the environment.

Sustainable Development or Sustainability is rarely at the heart of The Wildlife Trusts' educational provision. On one hand, this stance can be considered to be an appropriate NGO response to a primarily Government-directed branch of environmental work that may be constrained by economic aims and traditional government politics (Doyle and McEachern 1998; Fien 1993). On the other hand, it is recognised that local environmental issues connect to global issues, economic affairs and traditional politics. By remaining outside these matters, The Wildlife Trust partnership may neglect its freedom to engage in Global Ecology which can involve communicating in a political forum that is no longer state-centred but global (Princen and Finger 1994). A global level of NGO environmental education work is more readily addressed by The Wildlife Trusts' educational activities and aspirations to make Biodiversity relevant to people.

Overall, the Trusts' educational provision is not carried out by The Wildlife Trust partnership as a unified NGO. Education activities and individual approaches are developed at local Trust level, often on an ad-hoc basis. Perhaps the period of the Trusts' formation, when they developed as isolated naturalists groups, informs their contemporary manner of operation (Lowe 1972). It is noticeable that the local Trusts' past need to be distinct and to determine their own work continues in current planning and management of environmental education. Local Trusts' desires for individuality also amplify the partnership culture of ambiguous and negative meanings of education; such a culture then magnifies the extemporised nature of Wildlife Trust educational provision.

7.5.2 What can The Wildlife Trusts do in its delivery of environmental education; what are its limits and potentials?

It may be said that the limits and potentials of The Wildlife Trusts' provision of environmental education provision are influenced by:

- A range of tensions that impact upon the Trusts, many of which have historical bases
- The Wildlife Trusts' management of its education provision
- The Wildlife Trusts' operation as an organisation with a niche role in providing environmental education in the UK
- The Wildlife Trusts' educational image and culture

The Wildlife Trusts exist as an organisation that historically and more recently has operated in the context of an array of tensions that impact upon its educational work. So far, 'tension' has not been highlighted as a theme in discussion of any of the three areas of Wildlife Trust educational work investigated by this study. The reason for this is that tensions permeate *throughout* the Trusts' education activities, their strengths and weaknesses and the educational culture of the Trusts. It is the case that almost every category and theme examined in 7.2, 7.3 and 7.4 might be discussed in terms of tensions that impact upon the Trusts. Instead it seems more useful to conclude with illustrations. For example, in the context of educational activities, there exist tensions between providing Wildlife Watch as a means for junior membership and as an activity based club for young people. Also, there are tensions associated with providing activities for school children rather than providing

informal experiences for wider members of communities. In the context of strengths and weaknesses, the theme of 'empowering decisions and actions' highlights that tensions exist among The Wildlife Trusts acting as part conservative, Government-affiliated scientific organisation dedicated to managing reserves, and The Wildlife Trusts as part non-government organisation that aspires to be able to empower diverse groups of people to take action to look after local and visited wildlife habits, to learn about the environment in a critical way and imbue wider social change. In terms of educational culture, tensions can be seen among conservationists' (often represented by directors) and educationalists' historical roots, their approaches to working with people, their career prospects and funding opportunities for project work. The wider tension between the Trusts acting as individual Trusts and cooperating as one NGO under national coordination and guidance can exacerbate the conflicts among Trusts, within them and among different staff, volunteers, managers, educators and conservationists. Recommendations may be interpreted therefore as being aimed at reducing tensions or creating a better balance of tensions by responding to the areas of this thesis' discussions and conclusions that bring insight to their resolution.

This study and the preceding education review have found that the organisation's management practice limits its educational provision and practice. In particular, there is an imbalance between national and local management of education. This thesis has been able to identify that the very strengths of the Trusts – their local autonomy and ability to respond to local communities' needs – limit The Wildlife Trusts' education practice as a national NGO. The organisation has potential, however, to achieve better balance between the local and national elements of its work via a national educational strategy to which all Trusts can respond.

The process of developing a national education strategy should take account of past successful periods for The Wildlife Trusts that were shaped by strong leadership (Barkham 1989; Lowe and Goyder 1983; Micklewright 1986; Dwyer and Hodge 1996). Current educational strategy requires a leader such as The Wildlife Trusts' Director General to raise the profile of education throughout the organisation. Education strategy requires full involvement and leadership of each Trust director and ideally an education director at senior management level. 'Education' would be better redefined as 'people work'; it would be integrated wholly within wider Wildlife Trust strategy and would involve a wider set of Trust personnel in its delivery. This process of broadening people work would increase the potential for The Wildlife Trusts to achieve more communication among personnel within and between Trusts.

There are unexplored opportunities for The Wildlife Trusts to develop partnerships further. Beginning with engendering a strong partnership between local Trusts, partnerships with other NGOs could be developed, as well as links with commerce and, where reasonable, Government bodies. There has been a history of competition between The Wildlife Trusts and other NGOs, for public attention, members and resources (Juniper 1989; Potter and Adams 1993; Yearly 1991; Evans 1997). Replacing competition with partnership and strategy to avoid overlapping 'people work' activities could strengthen public support of the environmental movement and reduce duplication and waste of valuable resources.

The capacity for greater alliance between environmental NGOs could be extended through use of an organisation such as Wildlife and Countryside Link that

coordinates and distributes information to other voluntary bodies. Where UNCED (1992) failed to develop a global strategy for NGOs, a UK environmental NGO strategy may be a more viable achievement that could assist the development of niches in people work for The Wildlife Trusts, despite or perhaps because of the diversity of NGOs (Princen and Finger 1994). A UK environmental NGO strategy could raise the profile of environmental groups and provide well-needed publicity for The Wildlife Trusts. The Wildlife Trusts themselves should address long-standing matters of poor national publicity, diffuse and sometimes middle-class, elite image.

This study has revealed that the educational culture of The Wildlife Trusts is severely affected by poor levels of communication, but it could be improved by an education strategy for the partnership. There are cases of creative and excellent educational practice in individual Trusts; communicating these across the partnership and sharing best practice would raise the educational potential for the whole organisation. Especially effective individual examples of people work that utilise Trust reserves, wildlife sites, centres and other outdoor experiences should be shared. Likewise, Trusts should share with the partnership instances where Watch clubs are flourishing and where fieldwork and practical elements of school curriculum work are successful. Work that empowers young adults and parents to engage in practical conservation and environmental decision-making should be shared and developed, as should successful instances of fundraising or administration. Where local Wildlife Trusts have particular strengths, these should be built into a national strategy with local Trust personnel employed to provide training, advice and guidance for other Trusts.

Insufficient human resources and funding directed at people work present significant restrictions for The Wildlife Trusts. Programmes for engaging and valuing volunteers within people work could be developed. Work placements for students and adults have the potential to provide paths into Wildlife Trust employment, as well as cost-effective human resources. The Wildlife Trusts would benefit from modifying paid people-work posts to become longer term and better paid. There is potential to match the levels of fundraising for education and people work to those employed for conservation and reserve acquisition.

Research for this thesis found that matters of Trust management and culture generated limits and potentials, whereas the content of education activities is less of a concern. There were exceptions, however. Particular questions arise from this study about how the Trusts should involve themselves in activities concerning: education for Sustainability; Biodiversity education; schools work and the children's club Wildlife Watch. This point mirrors a key recommendation of the education review that suggested The Wildlife Trusts 'prune out' activities that are better provided by others.

It is not the aim of this study to debate the pros and cons of an NGO's provision of Education for Sustainability over 'environmental education'. However there are questions this study can answer concerning provision of Sustainability education and Biodiversity education. Overall, the Trusts are clearly providing 'environmental education'. Furthermore, it is suggested that Biodiversity education is a more fitting goal for The Wildlife Trusts than Sustainability education since the Trusts have responded to the Biodiversity theme with engagement in NGO partnership (RSPB 1993). The Trusts have already asserted their relatively autonomous position to direct their plans for Biodiversity education. If The Wildlife Trusts do develop their

implementation of Sustainability education, then the potential lies in making Sustainability *locally* relevant. Additionally, it is The Wildlife Trusts' provision of experiences of wildlife environments and generation of valuable affective response to such experiences, that can best address Sustainability by emphasising how natural environments can enhance human quality of life.

There is unmistakable potential for The Wildlife Trusts to reconsider and plan for education of young people in schools and, to a lesser extent in further and higher education. This situation results from the fact that formal education institutions face tremendous difficulties in delivering environmental education (Fien 1993; Palmer 1998a; DETR 1997; DEFRA 2002). Formal education institutions might benefit greatly from outside assistance and The Wildlife Trusts, as an NGO, could play a key role in delivering environmental education curricula.

The involvement of The Wildlife Trusts in delivering environmental education to the formal sector is limited however by several factors. Firstly, effective delivery requires a united Wildlife Trust partnership to provide resources to engage in formal education, attending to National Curriculum aims, recommendations from The Toyne Report (DFE 1993), educational resources and training for teachers. The Trusts are best placed to focus their involvement with formal education by using their strengths; thus the Trusts should concentrate upon providing fieldwork and outdoor experiences, using reserves and wildlife sites where possible. Some areas of provision could be left to other NGOs, for example those with strengths in developing school grounds (Groundwork) or in producing high quality teaching materials (WWF).

In considering how to engage in formal education, The Wildlife Trusts organisation should decide if it can compromise its NGO status in order to meet Government-directed National Curriculum targets. The Wildlife Trusts' commitment to schools education alone is unlikely to result in wide sectors of society engaging in and enjoying activities involving thinking and acting to the benefit of the environment. This study's in-depth interviews with educators serve to illustrate that formal education has limited influence in developing a person's pro-environmental disposition; this finding is substantiated by the prior work of Palmer (1993); Palmer (1988b); MORI (1987); Kidd and Kidd (1997). Additionally, The Wildlife Trusts face difficulty in providing schools with the sort of critical environmental education that is appropriate for NGOs (Huckle 1993; Fien 1993; Martin 1996).

The Trusts could develop schools work via operation of Wildlife Watch as a locally run club after school and during school vacations. Watch would benefit from educational strategy that redefines its purpose, its audience, staffing and membership administration. Linking Watch with schools could resolve a number of existing difficulties: engaging children in *local* Watch clubs; reaching children who live in sparsely populated areas; placing the incentive for Watch work in the hands of local Trusts and meeting child protection laws that could be addressed by involving parents and teachers in running the club. Watch's success in the past followed large-scale national publicity and this success could be reworked if National Office were to use national media to raise the profile of Watch and to continue to produce high quality Watch materials.

Decisions about niche roles and principal educational activities are challenging for The Wildlife Trusts, owing to their existing diversity of activities, locations and

audiences. Many individual Trusts' overlook some audiences such as youth, pre-school children, elderly, disabled and minority groups. These groups should be proactively included if the Trusts truly aim to broaden their people-work remit. An 'ideal model', suitable for individual Trusts to adopt for educational strategy, is an inappropriate goal. However the author proposes that Trusts could consider a two-stage approach that incorporates initial and mature stages of Wildlife Trust management of education activities. This approach is documented in the Final Report (Palmer and Lancaster 1999) of the review and has been adapted for inclusion Appendix H on page 332.

The Wildlife Trusts' greatest potentials for delivering education are twofold. Firstly, as a national NGO, the Trust partnership with its local branches is well placed to *tailor* its activities to *local* audiences, as advocated by authors such as Arcury and Christianson (1993); Hines et al (1986/7); Scott and Willits (1994). Secondly, The Wildlife Trusts' greatest assets – their wildlife reserves, sites and associated centres – provide potential to form the heart of the organisation's people work. First hand *experiences* of wildlife and wildlife environments are the Trusts' best means to afford people with the kind of memorable outdoor experiences and affective responses that this thesis proposes are such effective aspects of environmental education. The Trusts' provision of experiences can fulfil their hopes to raise awareness, provide knowledge and understanding about conservation issues, to enable enjoyment of nature, develop a concern for and understanding of the worth of biodiversity. The Wildlife Trusts clearly have the potential to engage their local communities in long-term participation in their conservation aims.

7.5.3 Limitations of the study and suggestions for further research

7.5.3.1 Methodology

Some limitations of this work have been outlined in the Methodology chapter; these are associated with the study's sample, data collection, analysis and presentation. Overall this thesis is, of course, limited by the fact that it is a case study. Although there are findings and conclusions that comment on NGOs' delivery of environmental education, most observations and recommendations for practice inevitably specifically correspond to The Wildlife Trusts.

Research into the practice and concept of education entails exploration of that which cannot easily be gauged or measured. It is inevitable that The Wildlife Trusts judge their work using the most visible measurements such as membership numbers, numbers of publicity mailings, numbers of visitors or children contacted. This thesis may be constrained to achieving a 'snapshot' of the more measurable aspects of educational practice between September 1998 and July 1999. This study may have generated insufficient understanding about the longer-term limits and potentials of The Wildlife Trusts' role in education.

7.5.3.2 Educational practice

Further understanding of the Trusts' role in education work could be achieved through longitudinal studies of Trusts' education practice. Additionally, there is scope for gathering much wider outside opinion of the Trusts' work and image as

well as understanding more about education from the perspectives of conservationists, volunteers, marketing staff and other Trust personnel.

This study demonstrates that, given the evidence for the significant influence of The Wildlife Trust' educational culture upon educational practice, future research should explore this matter further. There is scant research literature that has examined, in particular, how environmental organisations such as The Wildlife Trusts face unclear, disparate and negative understandings of environmental education or people work. Much environmental education literature, apart from a body of 1980s North American conservation writing, has neglected to notice the rifts and misunderstandings that exist among the people who are influential in managing, funding and practising the delivery of environmental education or conservation's people work. Such an area of research is ripe for further investigation.

This work has added to the growing body of research that interrogates the value of formal education in developing people's pro-environmental disposition. There is now a call for longitudinal study in order to understand much more fully the impact of formal education that involves well-resourced teaching of environmental education and/or Education for Sustainability within schools and further/higher education establishments.

7.5.3.3 The role of NGOs

Future work could specifically investigate how NGOs, in particular, are able to assist teachers to deliver strong formally taught programmes of environmental education and/or Education for Sustainable Development.

The research title: Environmental Education and the Non-Governmental Organisation – A Case Study of The Wildlife Trusts makes the assumption that The Wildlife Trusts fits the title NGO. On account of The Wildlife Trust organisation's infrequent self-references to itself as an NGO within this research's literature, interviews and documentation, it is necessary for further thought to be given to suitability of NGO nomenclature. Undoubtedly, The Wildlife Trusts falls into the category of 'an organisation' and if this research were to be repeated or granted space for more extensive literature review, then research into understanding organisations and organisational culture could have been explored. Overall, this thesis has been an attempt to explore an environmental body's education work in the context of a set of 'fuzzy' environmental NGO attributes. Additional research could investigate Trust personnel's understandings of The Wildlife Trust' NGO characteristics and roles; given more space, this study might have undertaken such a task.

Finally, this research would benefit from similar studies that clarify other UK environmental NGOs' involvement in delivering environmental education, as well as their limits and potentials. So persistent are competition and duplicated effort among NGOs that research fully comparing and comprehending their education activities is necessary. Such research could assist in the creation of a strong partnership among environmental NGOs in the UK, enabling them to take a formidable and autonomous lead in environmental education.

Appendices

Appendix A Questions for education review of The Wildlife Trusts

(Letters indicate area of review which question addresses[17])

1a All discussions are impartial and independent, this is an independent and genuine external review.

2a Our discussions will be confidential and no Trust or individual will be named in the report unless for purposes of promoting examples of good practice.

3b Why should the WTs exist?
What are the most important functions of the Trusts?
Are these local or global?
What *should* the WTs ideally do at national and local level?

4b What does education mean in the context of the WTs?
Who is education aimed at?
How would you wish to see it defined?

5c What do you consider to be the best practice of The Wildlife Trusts in general?

6c What do you do best here, in this Trust?

7c/d How could you do it, (i.e. what you do best), better?

8c/e How do you know it works?
Do you engage in monitoring and evaluations?
How could monitoring and evaluation be done better?
Who should do it – you or National Office?

9c How can the WTs best coordinate efforts to focus on best practice and eliminate duplication of effort?

10c How do you run and manage this thing called education, including the quality of it?
What do you do that has real or significant impact?
Where does the money go?
Who makes the decisions about where the money goes?
Are you doing things that may be you shouldn't be?

11c In terms of the quality of experiences provided on the nature reserves – how could experience be made better, (i.e. more of a significant impact?

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[17] Areas of review to be addressed by interview questions:
(a)preamble; (b)general overview; (c)educational provision locally and nationally: review and evaluation; (d)unique or key functions; (e)monitoring and evaluation; (f)the decade ahead; (g)influence on policy; (h)key recommendations (Palmer and Lancaster 1999:55)

12e *Are* the experiences of good quality in your opinion?
How do you know?

13e Can you tell me about any other experiences provided by this Trust, that you haven't already mentioned, for example: visitor centres, information services including web pages, themed events or educational projects, Watch projects, adult training programmes, campaigns, others?

14 e And what about the monitoring of these?

15c/e In terms of the management of nature reserves, are there any desired changes?
What techniques could be employed for a better visitor experience at you nature reserves?

16c/e And what could be done for better experience in visiting other aspects of the Trust?
How do you provide visitors with up to date and accurate information?

17c/f What is the role and function of your education committee?
Who is involved with the organisation and running of the Trusts' education?
Can we see examples of agendas and minutes?
In an ideal world, would you wish to see changes, major or minor, in the education committees'
-existence
-role
-function?

18c/f According to the Conservation Plan, WTs are concerned with
-provision of accessible, relevant information
-educational programmes and projects
-initiatives to encourage people to enjoy, understand, take action, celebrate wildlife
How do you prioritise these?
Are there tensions among them?
To which of the 3 should the greatest attention be given in the forthcoming decade?

19c/f How well does what you do fit in with the Conservation Plan (section 7 especially)?
Do you consider that you are making 'Biodiversity relevant to people'?
What are your views on the plan and its implementation regarding education?

20c/f Who are the 'partners' of your Trust?
What is the relationship between you?
What or who are the main obstacles to progress for you (progress in the delivery of education)?

21g Do and should the WTs have a role in influencing national policy on conservation and biodiversity (or should it be left to others)?
If the WTs should have a role, what should that be?
What specific aspects of policy should the WTs influence

22f/h What do you think should be the future for Wildlife Watch?
Why?
Should it continue?
Who should run it?

23f/h What should be the role of National Office, as far as education is concerned?
What is the current role?
Would you change it?
Would you close it down/strengthen it?
And what about the role of the Director General?
Is this the time to change the whole national structure of the organisation and its management?

24f/h What would you do if you had a 'blank slate' for education (for the WTs?)
Would there be stronger national coordination or none at all?

25 Thank you for answering all those questions, is there anything you'd like to ask me?
Is there anything you wish I had asked?
Is there anything you'd like to tell me in confidence?

Appendix B Questions for visitors to Trust sites

Your help in answering the questions below is greatly appreciated. Please tick boxes as appropriate or write in the spaces provided. Thank you.

1. Please begin by telling us which Trust site you are visiting

2. Is this your first visit to a Wildlife Trust site? ☐ yes ☐ no

3. If no, how many previous visits to Trust sites have you made?

   ☐ 0-5 ☐ 5-10 ☐ more than 10

4. Where did you first hear of The Wildlife Trusts?

5. Do you consider this visit as:

   Excellent value for money ☐

   Good value for money ☐

   Poor value for money ☐

6. What do you consider to be the best aspects of your present visit here?

   _____

   _____

   _____

7. Can you think of any ways in which your present visit could have been made more interesting and rewarding?

   _____

   _____

   _____

8. If you have visited other Wildlife Trust sites, please tell us which places you have enjoyed visiting and why

   _____

9. The Wildlife Trusts are concerned with 3 aspects of education as shown below. Please tick which of the 3 you think should be their most important function, particularly in terms of helping to make Biodiversity relevant to people.

(i) Provision of accessible, relevant information about conservation and wildlife ☐

(ii) Organised educational programmes and projects, e.g. The Wildlife Watch Clubs ☐

(iii) Initiatives to encourage people to enjoy, understand, take action and celebrate wildlife ☐

Why have you selected this one?

_____

_____

_____

10. Do you feel that you have learnt something new about the environment and conservation of wildlife on this visit? If so, what?

_____

_____

_____

11. Have you had any other personal experience of the educational work of The Wildlife Trusts other than on visits such as this? If so, please describe this

_____

_____

_____

12. Please comment on whether you think The Wildlife Trusts have role in influencing national and international policy on conservation and Biodiversity or should this be left to others?

_____

_____

_____

13. In the space below, please feel free to make any further comments on your views of the educational work of The Wildlife Trusts, either at this site or in general, e.g. **What they should be engaged in, what you think they are engaged in, and how successful you think they are at helping to make Biodiversity relevant to people.**

This questionnaire has been designed as part of a review of the educational work of The Wildlife Trusts being conducted by the Centre for Research on Environmental Thinking and Awareness at the University of Durham.

Please hand it in when complete to staff at the Trust site you are visiting or if you prefer it may be mailed to:

Professor J.A.Palmer and Ms. J.C. Lancaster
Old Shire Hall
University of Durham
DH1 3QP

Thank you again for your cooperation.

Appendix C Questions for an independent sample

Your help in answering the questions below is greatly appreciated. Please tick boxes as appropriate or write in the spaces provided. Thank you.

1. Have you heard of the organisation called The Wildlife Trusts?

   ☐ yes ☐ no

   If you answer is yes, please answer the questions below which are relevant to you.

2. Where did you first hear of The Wildlife Trusts?

   _____

3. Have you ever visited a Trust site? If so, please name site(s) visited.

   _____

   _____

   _____

4. Why do you think The Wildlife Trusts exist and what is their main function?

   _____

   _____

   _____

5. If you have ever visited Trust site(s), do you consider such visits to be:

   Excellent value for money ☐

   Good value for money ☐

   Poor value for money ☐

6. Which site have you enjoyed visiting the most and why?

   _____

   _____

7. Have you had any other personal experience of the educational work of The Wildlife Trusts other than on visits to their sites? If so, please describe this

   _____

   _____

8. The Wildlife Trusts are concerned with 3 aspects of education as shown below. Please tick which of the 3 you think should be their most important function, particularly in terms of helping to make Biodiversity relevant to people.

(i) Provision of accessible, relevant information about conservation and wildlife ☐

(ii) Organised educational programmes and projects, e.g. The Wildlife Watch Clubs ☐

(iii) Initiatives to encourage people to enjoy, understand, take action and celebrate wildlife ☐

Why have you selected this one?

_____

_____

_____

9. Please comment on whether you think The Wildlife Trusts have role in influencing national and international policy on conservation and Biodiversity or should this be left to others?

_____

_____

_____

_____

10. In the space below, please feel free to make any further comments on your views of the educational work of The Wildlife Trusts, either at this site or in general, e.g. **What they should be engaged in, what you think they are engaged in, and how successful you think they are at helping to make Biodiversity relevant to people.**

This questionnaire has been designed as part of a review of the educational work of The Wildlife Trusts being conducted by the Centre for Research on Environmental Thinking and Awareness at the University of Durham.

Please hand it in when complete to staff at the Trust site you are visiting or if you prefer it may be mailed to:

Professor J.A.Palmer and Ms. J.C. Lancaster
Old Shire Hall
University of Durham
DH1 3QP

Thank you again for your cooperation.

Appendix D Questions for in-depth interviews with education staff

1. First of all, can you tell me how you came to work in this role within The Wildlife Trusts?

2. Can you tell me what it means to you to be concerned about wildlife?

3. What do you think are particularly significant issues that affect wildlife in the UK?

4. Can you describe any memorable life experiences, which you think have developed your concern for wildlife?

5. When were these experiences?

6. Is there any single most influential experience that stands out?

7. Can you tell me when that was?

8. How have The Wildlife Trusts influenced your concern for wildlife?

9. Have any other NGOs been influential?

10. Do you think that your own formal education has been important in shaping your thinking or concern about wildlife?

Thanks so much, would you be able to answer just a few more questions about your biographical details?

Biographical data questions for in-depth interviews with education staff

(For me to fill in or for education staff to self-administer)

1. sex: male ☐ female ☐

2. Which age group do you fit into?

Under 20	☐
21-30	☐
31-40	☐
41-50	☐
51-60	☐
Over 60	☐

3. How would you describe your present occupation?

_____

_____

_____

4. Have you engaged in any different occupations in the past? If so, what?

5. Which of these best describes the area in which you currently live?

Urban ☐ Suburban ☐ Rural ☐

6. Which of these best describes the area in which you grew up?

Urban ☐ Suburban ☐ Rural ☐

7. Can you tell me briefly about your education in terms of any qualifications you have, including vocational and professional qualifications? How do they fit into the following categories?

Ordinary level or equivalent ☐
Advanced level or equivalent ☐
Vocational or professional ☐
University degree ☐
Higher degree ☐
Other ☐

8. Do you regularly engage in any of the following activities?

Reading about environmental or wildlife matters ☐

Membership of any environmental/wildlife conservation organisations ☐

Practical conservation ☐

Outdoor activities ☐

Lobbying local/national government on wildlife/environmental issues ☐

Attending environmental education courses ☐

Teaching environmental education courses ☐

Buying 'environmentally friendly' products ☐

Energy conservation ☐

Environmentally friendly transport use ☐

Recycling ☐

Thank you again for answering these questions, you have been immensely helpful.

Appendix E Selected in-depth interview

Interview with educator E12
Date of Interview: 24/09//98
Interviewer: Joanna Lancaster (I)
Participant: Education officer 12 (E12)
Location: Avon Wildlife Trust

I: First of all how did you come to work for the Wildlife Trust? How did you happen to have this job?

E12: Right, I came through on the Manpower Services Commission Community Programme Scheme in the mid eighties which was, um a scheme for unemployed college leavers and there was money specifically available for it for environmental organisations to run projects that would involve...(*interrupted*).

I: Sorry what was it called again? Manpower...

E12: Manpower Service Commission Community Programme Scheme - it was a training scheme for unemployed college leavers, well the unemployed in back in the mid eighties early mid eighties, *mid* eighties. Are you taping it already?

I: Yes I think so, hopefully...

E12: Quite a few Trusts wrapped around that community programme scheme and it was a very useful source of labour for the Trust, covering all aspects of the Trust's work, um and I came on board and joined the sort of education promotions team as promotions officer and that involved running events. I mean the brief was to raise awareness of the Wildlife Trust, also look for sponsorship opportunity, so fund raising as well. It was organising the many events and getting sponsorship for the completion of the Environmental Education Centre and doing the publicity.

I: And what were the influences behind this? What influenced you to go into this area?

E12: What influenced me? Well I've always had, have had, a lifelong passion for er... my natural environment, I was fortunate enough to grow up in the countryside – but a countryside under threat.

I: Yes

E12: Now my early years, sort of 0 to 12, I was surrounded by you know - wildflowers abounded but in my teens I was conscious, I was conscious that the wildlife the countryside was becoming under threat and that habitats were disappearing um and there were high profile issues about countryside you know with marshes being drained and you know mono-forests, I mean I'm very aware of the changing countryside and it was changing to the detriment of wildlife.

I: Yes

E12: Um. So yes when I was in Secondary school I really wanted to work in some

aspects of the countryside and at that point I wasn't aware of nature conservation as such as being an area of employment and then I went on to study Geography at a Polytechnic which was very academic, not at all vocational. It didn't really cover what I wanted to know about, that was management of the countryside practically. So I transferred to a diploma in countryside management at a nearby agricultural college and that looked at all rural land use including nature conservation which had a very high profile on the course so that sort of switched me on to the nature conservation aspect of things.

I: Yes

E12: Um, so I've just you know continued to pursue that interest and passion, through my work and also in a voluntary capacity too, because in my own time I pursue various environmental interests in a voluntary way.

I: Ok. So what does it mean to you to be concerned about wildlife?

E12: Well I see it in terms of the planet, you know I really feel that we should be living on a very healthy, healthy, happy planet as well as getting on with our fellow citizens. We shouldn't be destroying the environment that we live in and I've had the privilege of living in a beautiful environment as a child and growing up in a beautiful environment and I feel that we should be looking after that environment and passing it on to our children to enjoy and appreciate. But we are damaging that environment and we, as adults, are responsible for that and we should be taking action, so fortunately there are many organisations out there now that are actively working to protect the environment, as well at The Wildlife Trusts so the future isn't bleak but we ought, you know, we can't just sit back and er...let someone else manage it we have to involve everybody. And we can all do our own bit; we can all do something towards managing the environment. You know, it can be just something small, just converting your own back garden into a wildlife garden or you can be doing something at school in the school grounds and just generally, the way you live your life, doing the things that have a minimum impact on the environment, you know and not being materialistic and being indulgent in buying the latest gadget and changing your car every two years, conserving water and recycling you know rubbish and the whole package really. Because at the end of the day it will have a indirect effect on the wildlife and the countryside you know, both in protection and in a more secure future if we are aware of all the wide environmental issues.

I: Yes, ok. Well what sorts of issues are significant to you?

E12: To me?

I: Yes, to you in respect of UK's wildlife.

E12: Um, well basically our individual life styles which we may think initially don't impact on wildlife but the rubbish thing, you know the pressure on the countryside of the landfill sites and quarrying for road building, we should be reducing the number of cars on the road, we shouldn't be putting pressure on the roads to have more roads. We should be reducing cars and having public transport so I do if I can...if I can, you know I'm concerned about what I should be practising, so I try and use public transport. I try and recycle and I try and encourage friends to (*pause*)...yes that's the thing. Its not just about managing my garden for wildlife its all the things

we do and you know not using ridiculous amounts of paper.

I: Yes. Why do you think these are important to you? (*Pause*). I know this is a really deep question.

E12: Yes I just feel that at the end of the day, we're a very greedy society and we, we've got to have all the comforts and luxury and you need resources, all the resources come from the countryside to make these things and you've got to reduce the pressure. We don't *need* all these resources you know. I think that we've got to learn that we can live quite simply and still get plenty of pleasure from life without being materialistic, and it won't just benefit us it would benefit the actual environment (Pause).

I: Yes.

E12: It would make us a lot less selfish and a lot more caring about our fellow citizens, we spend so much time focusing on buying having lots of money and having lovely holidays, having a big house, a car and video or whatever. I don't believe that those things give pleasure. I don't think that they should be a high priority. I think you know, that we should gain pleasure and satisfaction from getting on with people and um enjoying the environment around you.

I: Ok.

E12: Having a good variety of species, of plants and animals...the Biodiversity thing, you know people are much happier when they are surrounded by trees and green and variety, than when they are surrounded by tarmac. In cities in particular where there is very little green space, when green space is threatened, its fantastic, just plain ordinary folk you think wouldn't care, actually stand up and say 'Hang on a minute, you know, that's our tree there. I love that tree, you know that gives me a lot of pleasure'. You know if it goes, it just causes the quality of life to deteriorate in that community.

I: Yes, Ok (*Pause*). Can you describe or think of any memorable life experiences, which you feel have developed your concern for wildlife?

E12: A very big one six years ago, in my local community in Bristol where a green site was under threat by development and was actually bulldozed and up until that point we had actually run a campaign to protect the site. We had a public enquiry when they decided whether the land should be developed or not and after the public enquiry the planning application was turned down on grounds of the wildlife value of the site. It was a tremendous victory for local people who had influenced that decision along with the Wildlife Trust so we were really absolutely delighted with that and that gave us a tremendous buzz and then, but sadly a year later the developers moved onto the site because they knew that they could only develop the site if the land didn't have a wildlife value to it and of course there were no real strong laws to protect that site. So, when that happened (Pause) the adrenalin started pumping and together as a community we fought back. Gosh we fought for two years to save this site and we thought this has happened, we've got to protect the site, we've got to put pressure on the local authority to compulsorily purchase the site from the developers and it had only been done once in the country before, we believe and we thought it might well be impossible but over three years, 3 or 4 years we

managed to achieve that and in the end the site was compulsorily purchased, by the local authority. Eventually it got designated a local nature reserve and um which was the ultimate aim for the group. And that gave me tremendous pleasure. I was involved with a group of people from all walks of life, all ages you know, all levels of intelligence. Everyone was just so active using their particular strengths to the benefit of the campaign, from organising, you know, fund raising events, baking cakes, writing letters to local councillors and some of us were good at talking to local councillors at meetings and collectively we ran a very successful campaign. And the pleasure that too, afterwards, it gave um...tremendous motivation to other groups and hope where other groups were in similar situations and not so far down the line as us. It gave them the boost that they could achieve that, that it is possible to take a site from development. That was very, very significant, yes in my life, that.

I: Yes - any others? At any other time in your life? Any sort of significant or memorable environmental experience?

E12: Um, I have to say the tree dressing project here last year, because we were working with audiences we hadn't worked with before: the youth sector, 12-18 year olds and we were using the mechanism of environmental art which I thought might be treated with suspicion and um, it's not because it's something that a lot of youngsters enjoy doing - in an informal setting - art and sculptures and it was really satisfying to see young people having quite a good understanding of trees and woodlands and actually liking them and feeling they're important. I learned from that that we should never underestimate the level of understanding of the environment amongst young people and their concern for it because there's no doubt about it, I think the majority of young people, although they quite get dismissed for drug-taking and stealing cars and that malarkey, the majority do actually care about their local green space and local environment and also wider environmental issues like recycling and energy conservation and you know they're a huge force and it's underestimated. Mmm.

I: Any more experiences in your life that come to mind?

E12: (*Laughter*) Earth shattering experiences?

I: Not necessarily earth shattering, maybe small.

E12: No not really. When I was a child, I remember that there was a W.I. competition to collect as many wild flowers as you could and I came second. There was a boy in the village that got one more than me and I always, and when I look now at, at you know the disappearing countryside and lots of wild flowers under threat, I can always remember that age. We took it for granted really the variety of wild flowers around me and I thought they were beautiful and I loved them and I loved picking them and of course now you should discourage children from doing that.

I: Yes, when was that? What age was that?

E12: About 8, back in 1968

I: Yes.

E12: And um, so I always hark back to that, you know when we talk about wild flowers how lucky I was a child being surrounded by colourful fields and they are no longer there and that's sort of partly why I'm fighting for it really, because I was so lucky as a child to be surrounded by very beautiful countryside and I said that everyone should have that access and have that enjoyment. It really was part of my growing up you know, and it gave me such a buzz and I played in it, I learnt in it, you know that kind of thing. At weekends and holidays I'd always be out there in it enjoying it and I just feel that every other child should have that opportunity. Even in the city where there is very little green space, where there is green space that should be managed for wildlife for children to have that contact with the variety. And just simple things like blackberry picking...I mean every year, that always gives me a buzz to see city people out on the railway track where the brambles are picking blackberries. And for many children that is their first contact with nature and when they're actually doing it they spot other things like insects and they say 'Oh, what's that Mum?' If that can be encouraged that helps with the whole process of encouraging children to appreciate and understand what's around them and why it's important, then they'll value it and hopefully play a part in protecting it and be active about defending it when it's under threat.

I: Yes. How have The Wildlife Trusts influenced your concern for wildlife?

E12: I mean the work that we do here does give me a huge boost seeing all these schoolchildren coming through and learning about wildlife with our hands on activities and actually immersing themselves in...tubs and just seeing their eyes light up its always, you know 'this is great', 'what's this?' and at the end of the day, they say 'oh I really enjoyed today, thanks for having us' (*Laughter*). Well thank you for coming, you know. And after a visit they'll send us bundles of thank you letters and there will be quite a lot of detail in some of these letters about what they enjoyed about their visit and you know that they're actually learning something and they've going away and they've not forgotten and that's what important because it's not a one off visit its a one off learning experience. I think we're quite convinced that most of it's going to stick with them now and it may even nurture, you know, a new interest in the environment.

I: Yes. Do you feel that there is one significant experience? I mean you mentioned the local community reserve that's influenced you. Would you say that there is one single *most* influential experience for you out of these you have mentioned?

E12: I think the ..... Hill experience. It made me realize. I'd never really appreciated that ordinary people actually care about the local environment and are prepared to do something about it and not expect other people who are better equipped and better educated to tackle it. You know the site is under threat, it's great to mobilise people into action. You should never underestimate what the average person in the street thinks about local environment because I think that at the end of the day most people do care. I mean I'm lucky to work at a visitor centre where we see so many people coming through: schools in the term time and in the holidays the general public families and we have special event days and people ring up on the phone with enquiries about wildlife - 'I've got a hedgehog in my garden, what do I do with it?' and 'I've got a mass of spawn in my pond, I must get rid of it' and that's a great opportunity to educate and they always so appreciative when you give them some information, however little it is. But sadly, out there it's still under threat you know from development, from intensive farming and you know the river's got a long

way to go to reach a perfect planet but I think that we are making pretty good progress.

I: Mm how have, you've just talked about a few of those things, how have The Wildlife Trusts influenced your concern for wildlife?

E12: Um

I: You have just talked about working here.

E12: Yes I mean at college I was made aware of them, we used to study Wildlife Trusts at college and um being immersed in the Trust movement in the last ten years and I have had 2 or 3 years out working for a city council and I continued as a volunteer in the Trust. But I've got tremendous respect for them they do a fantastic job at the end of the day because they're working at local level and working with local communities. You know, there's a huge range of people um, and you know, we just need to raise the profile nationally, because there are still a lot of people out there that don't know about The Wildlife Trusts but they care about wildlife and I mean that's good but it would just be good to make more people aware of what we are about and what we have to offer.

I: Are there any other NGOs that have been influential for you?

E12: Influential? (*pause*) I think because the Wildlife Trust had this really good specific brief of protecting land, of acquiring land as nature reserves and that has been tremendous news to me that that organisation has been out there, being able to protect parks and land in the country that had been under threat. This time I was aware that you know a lot of countryside had been lost and swallowed up by development, that there was an organisation that was in the business of acquiring sites or working alongside landowners and managing their sites for wildlife benefit er...you know... the National, I have also got tremendous respect for the National Trust. I mean I was a member of the National Trust for about 3 or 4 years. I never visited a property but I joined because they do marvellous work in buying up coastline, the Operation Neptune project whatever it's called a few years back in protecting beautiful areas of coastline and improving access for the public you know with the footpaths on the coastline.

I: Yes

E12: So I think they are very good...the more global, Friends of the Earth and Greenpeace - I just have a passing interest but I think I've been terribly focused on local wildlife but I haven't had time for them. But again I do watch with interest and support them.

I: When was your sort of interest in those groups?

E12: Probably in the late eighties, I had twin boys six years ago so the last six years have been a bit hectic really and it's been a real balancing act!

I: It sounds like it (*laughter*).

E12: Yes it's been hard trying to look after boys and work here and make sure that

the place is looked after. I'm now sort of actively involved in R.... Hill campaign. We now have a community group that manages the site as a nature reserve so and as a result of having young children I've become a watch leader and I'm beginning to understand young children much better.

I: Yes.

E12: Certainly in the young free and single phase of the late eighties, when I was in my twenties, I had a lot of energy then for being involved in Friends of the Earth and Greenpeace. Well I was a paid up member and if there were any events or local campaigns I would try and get involved with them. But also I've been very concerned with other things...I've been very supportive of OXFAM and Third World issues. I don't want to lose sight of what's going on in other countries and the poverty that's there and helping other people that are worse off than myself. So I do tend to respond to their appeals as well.

I: Do you think that your own formal education has been important in shaping your concern for wildlife in any way?

E12: I don't think so. No, no. I had absolutely crappy careers advice at school, just pushed into nursing or teaching and I left school with no real particular idea, apart from the fact I knew I loved the countryside and I thought the ultimate would be to have a job to do with it. I thought well, possibly farm management. That's what I was thinking then because I couldn't think of anything else but I thought there must be something else I could do in the countryside that's involved in its management. Then when I became aware of the Conservation Movement, I thought: 'great, this is where I want to be'. So I've been very lucky really to fit in back in the eighties and to be here now and the job that covers a huge variety of projects, formal education, informal education and managing a nature reserve her and managing buildings as a volunteer.

I: Ok, that's great. Would you mind just finishing off the interview by answering on paper these questions a bit more about you – biographical questions? Thanks.

Appendix F Conclusions and recommendations of The Wildlife Trusts' education review

CONCLUSIONS

Without doubt, The Wildlife Trusts are achieving a tremendous amount in the general field of 'education' and making Biodiversity relevant to people. Numerous examples of good practice and innovative activities have been observed and documented from all areas of the UK. Successful educational activities are developed and implemented within the context of the Trusts' greatest strengths, viz

- They are locally based and can build upon local enthusiasm and support;
- They have an intimate knowledge of local countryside, wildlife and other conservation initiatives;
- They are able to respond directly to local needs;
- They manage land and reserves dedicated to the conservation of nature and Biodiversity.

Yet we conclude that the Trusts' greatest strengths also underpin some of the organisations weaknesses with respect to educational policy and practice.

- Because of the strong local emphasis, there is lack of national coherence and direction; lack of an agreed definition of and strategy for education.
- Local autonomy, despite its many advantages, encourages duplication of effort and resources; dilution of core funding, overall corporate identity and marketing impact; and is counter-productive to the potential for an overall national strategy for education to take account of the contribution of other NGOs and key players in the field.

Our recommendations are intended to assist The Wildlife Trusts in what we conclude to be its most crucial task in the decade ahead, namely:

- **Achieving a more effective balance between national strategy and direction enabling local autonomy and initiatives which respond to local needs and build upon the all-important local enthusiasm and sense of ownership.**

Education *must* remain one of the central aspects of overall Trust policy. It is one of the greatest challenges that lie ahead if the Conservation Plan is to be implemented with maximum effectiveness. It is a challenge for all parties concerned. If Trusts are aiming to help people enjoy the natural world, to understand it and respect their place within it, and to take action to conserve and improve it, and wish to maximise their potential for achieving this fundamental aim, then all key players, viz

- The Director General and Senior Management
- National Office
- Individual Trusts and Personnel

need to review and change their particular roles and contributions.

Together, all members of the partnership need put time, effort and resources into effecting a substantial internal attitude change. The required change focuses on four matters in particular. Firstly, there needs to be a shift towards a common understanding that education is not simply about Wildlife Watch, or school related work or any other individual focus. Important as these activities might be, too much emphasis upon them endorses the message that these *are* the educational work for the Trusts and that all other activities are, by definition, separate. A common understanding of education will embrace all people and all activities in an holistic approach to helping people understand and appreciate the natural world and its life. Secondly, and related to this point, there needs to be an increasing realisation that education and conservation are not separate entities but go hand in hand. They should be planned and managed in a coherent and integrated manner. Thirdly, an attitudinal shift is required relating to the management of Reserves. These areas of land are probably the best overall feature of the Trusts, yet in many instances are remote from or totally separate from activities which are described as educational. Finally, an attitude change is needed with respect to national policy. In order to achieve maximum success as one of the key players in the field of conservation education, the organisation needs to act as a fully integrated national body which rationalises the use of its total resources for educational purposes. It will not achieve maximum success if it continues to function as a loose affiliation of independent local Trusts. There should be a nationally agreed educational strategy which individual Trust programmes adhere to and build upon in ways most appropriate to themselves, taking due account of local needs.

We suggest that The Wildlife Trusts may wish to consider the following issues in order to effect this process of review and change.

- A definitive statement should be made about the meaning and interpretation of the term 'education' as used within the context of the Conservation Plan. A common understanding of this should be promoted throughout the Truest. Everything must be done to shift the dominant view of education *away* from the notion that it is specifically or solely to do with Wildlife Watch, or schools, or formal programmes, or is the preserve of a select group of Trust staff and *towards* the common understanding that education is about people's developing understanding of and relationships with their environment (in this context with particular emphasis on conservation and biodiversity). Implementation of this recommendation requires charismatic leadership in the form of a 'people's person' who will lead all engaged in the Trusts' educational activities to think more broadly about their work, to reach a wider audience and develop education across the partnership alongside other areas of endeavour, notably conservation. This recommendation is not to suggest that activities such as Wildlife Watch and programmes for schools etc. should cease to exist. These are core activities which should remain within a changing understanding of what the overall educational aims and strategy of the Trusts are and within changing context and management structures as detailed in other Recommendations.

- Every effort should be made by the Trusts to achieve closer integration of educational and conservation activities. More strategic and closely monitored use of Trust reserves for educational purposes could lead to substantial benefits in educational terms. Closer integration of education and conservation work requires appropriate management structures. At local level, conservation and education staff should have clearly defined duties and responsibilities which enable them to work in partnership and as equally important personnel in the Trust's management team.

- Both National Office and the Director General should have major and enhanced roles in defining, influencing and monitoring education at a strategic level. They also have major roles in enabling good practice in education throughout the Trusts.

- The National Office should play a much stronger role in relation to resources, fund-raising, publicity, marketing, corporate identity and corporate communications. All of these impact upon success in the field of education.

- Regional strengths should be identified, built upon and monitored. More aspects of educational work should be regionally resourced.

- All Trusts should design and develop a rolling programme of three year strategic plans for education, set within the national context as laid down by National Office. Such plans should include local aims and targets for activities for the three-year period, and indicate how these link with both the Conservation Plan (section 7) and the Trusts' conservation activities. Each plan should be reviewed (and revised if necessary) annually within the Local Trusts and should be subject to more detailed review at the end of each period for three years. The three yearly review should include staff from National Office, who will be enabled by this process to monitor what is happening locally/regionally and also to find out examples of best practice which can be disseminated throughout the partnership.

- The Wildlife Trusts should build upon what they do best as an overall organisation in education terms, and 'prune out' those weaker or less well developed activities which other NGOs and institutions are better placed to achieve with greater success. This final general recommendation inevitably goes beyond the work of the Trusts alone and the remit of this Review. Ideally, similar Reviews should be conducted with all of the major players in the field of conservation, wildlife and education so that comparative strengths and weaknesses can be identified and applied to strategic inter-NGO educational policies and plans. The Wildlife Trusts have a key role to play in influencing policy and decision-making at the highest level nationally and internationally; yet this role would be very greatly strengthened if well co-ordinated strategy and policy emanates from partnership and collaboration with other educational providers.

The two core Recommendations detailed below are designed to address these general points and issues. Recommendation 2 outlines a suggested National Strategy for People and incorporates recommended action points. Four areas of action are implicit within the Strategy and its recommendations, viz (i) the need to define education and promote national understanding of and policy relating to this definition, (ii) addressing core weaknesses in the Trusts as a whole (in particular, image and current separation of education and conservation). We regard such matters as being of utmost importance. If they are addressed, their inevitably enhanced quality and impact of educational activities will follow, (iii) focussing efforts on particularly significant initiatives and (iv) developing the mechanisms for implementing appropriate educational work during the next decade.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Adopt an agreed definition of education viz:**

   Activities and experiences aimed at helping people of all ages to understand and appreciate the natural world, and encouraging people to take action to conserve and improve it.

2. **Adopt and implement the following National Strategy for People to be adhered to and interpreted at local Trust level (recognising that people at are the heart of the agreed definition).**

N.B. Strategy not included in appendix.

Appendix G Summary of Wildlife Trusts' reported educational activities, potential and limits.

EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES	POTENTIAL for DEVELOPMENT	LIMITS
COMMUNITY EVENTS		
EVENTS FOR FAMILIES & COMMUNITIES	Trust-wide activity; potential to use centres more; publicity; potential to develop and unify Wildlife Trust image; events may provide outdoor experiences.	Lack of resources, poor organisation, lack of National Office coordination & assistance; lack of sharing best practice. Events as one-off experiences.
AWARENESS RAISING PROJECTS	Local involvement, awareness-raising at heart of Trusts' definition of education; fit in with further education activities.	Difficulties in involving new audiences; building on pre-existing awareness.
ACTIVITIES FOR TARGETED GROUPS	Developing niches for education, resource-appropriate; involves partnerships; stages of PED development recognised; women & parents are interested in future; involvement of conservation staff.	Trustees making decisions on or limiting audiences. Lack of strategy or agreement across Wildlife Trust partnership.
WILDLIFE GARDENING PROMOTION	Definable and 'targetable' group; appropriate for urban and rural Trusts and all age groups including older adults, disabled.	Seen as peripheral to conservation work; lack of National office promotion and support; carried out by few Trusts.
WILDLIFE INFORMATION SERVICE	Could be shared by regional Trusts, can involve work placement for vols/ staff; may attract students; partnership between education and conservation personnel; publicity for Trusts e.g. web pages.	Time consuming; expensive; unclear who does it; may be used only by those already interested by wildlife.
WILDLIFE HOLIDAYS/ BREAKS/CAMPS	Broad set of audiences, adults & young people; good for Wildlife Trusts' image; provides outdoor experiences and may facilitate affective responses. Resources/tents/centres could be shared by Trusts	Needs partnership, time & creative staff. May require extra health and safety planning and resourcing.
PARK REGENERATION*	Involves local community; suitable for urban Trusts; enables people- place relationships.	Problematic when community activities are seen as separate from education; can be one-off activity, needs follow-up; attracts those interested in environment already. Done by other NGOs.
CHURCHYARD WILDLIFE PROJECTS*	Involves a 'ready-made' community; suitable for rural low population areas as well as urban. Churchyard can be a visible wildlife site.	Lack of sharing ideas across whole Wildlife Trust partnership; may only attract church-goers.

ACTIVITIES FOR MEMBERS/VOLS/ADULTS		
WALKS AND/OR TALKS	Suitable for families and intergenerational learning; provides outdoor experiences; uses Trust reserves; can be held on sites other than reserves; a local experience.	May have restricted appeal among members only; lack of leadership and coordination; lack of creativity; lack of publicity.
ADULT EDUCATION COURSES, QUALIFICATION, TRAINING	A case of lifelong learning; assists process of including and valuing volunteers; provides and develops 'expert' naturalists; potential for all Trusts to develop adult education; Government interest in funding.	Bureaucracy, paperwork and time; lack of National Office coordination; Too closely aimed at 'the converted' to produce naturalists.
MAGAZINES & NEWSLETTERS	Useful for retaining members, providing the specialist information members want; newsletters between Trusts can increase communication and organisation of Wildlife Trust educational activities.	On fringe of education work; members' only work can perpetuate Trusts' elite image; variability across Trusts; waste individual Trust resources.
OBSERVATION & RECORDING	A traditional strength of Wildlife Trusts; can be used both with existing members and other adults; focuses on local wildlife; provides experiences of wildlife; a participatory activity.	Few Trusts include this as education activity; lack of sharing best practice; potentially negative association with Trusts' past scientific image.
MEMBERS AND VOLUNTEERS' EVENTS	Volunteers can be included and valued; corporate membership can be encouraged or continued via special events.	Members-only events can be perceived exclusive. Limits of one-off events which are resource consuming
PLACEMENT SCHEMES*	Placement schemes can be part of valuable life experiences developing environmental concern and action; people on placement are valuable resource; potential for wider engagement across partnership and via outside funding.	Possible over-reliance upon Government initiatives to fund schemes; limited by lack of follow up communication with individuals; culture change needed - placements in education field less common than in conservation work.
WILDLIFE WATCH		
WATCH ACTIVITIES	Watch has support of most Trusts for further development; potential for liasing more with school but for informal activities, not academic; families & teachers could assist running clubs; strong historical foundation; Watch club materials are praised in and outside Trusts; potential for junior wing of Trusts and for partnership with other organisations for finance & management.	Lack of agreement regarding management and administration; limited by population distribution around local Trusts; problems with attracting large scale funding like conservation projects; lack of local clubs to match the national Watch promotion; image as elite club for middle classes; need for local and national profile to be lifted.

WATCH LEADER TRAINING	Individual Trusts can fund training; potential for each Trust to have at least one paid member of Watch staff; training values Watch personnel and keeps them up-to-date with environmental education research developments.	Inconsistency among Trusts – some have paid staff, many are voluntary; cannot be run solely by voluntary personnel in local Trusts; insufficient partnership with other organisations; Limited by individual Trusts' ability to respond to health and safety requirements.
OTHER CHILDREN'S CLUBS	Provision of outdoor and locally based experiences and activities; potential for local Trusts to exercise ownership and manage their own clubs.	Diffuses unified image of Wildlife Trust partnership; may waste resources.
WATCH EVENTS*	Provider of initiation into Watch club experiences; may be used to introduce schools or other groups to Trusts' reserves.	Costly in time and resources; separation between members and other children; limited publicity.
PUBLICITY		
GENERAL PUBLICITY	Partnerships between different groups of staff may help educational culture; may broaden audiences; publicity has assisted Wildlife Trusts in past; publicity generates a 'face'.	Internal and external perceptions see publicity as weak for Wildlife Trusts; limited by expectations from Directors that education and publicity require similar staff inputs; success measured by numbers of publicity outputs.
CAMPAIGNING	Potential to gain both national and local publicity; sharing of partnership campaign resources can benefit local Trusts; local negative environmental issues can strongly affect people.	National issues may be inappropriate for local campaigns; wasted resources through duplication of effort; difficulties in measuring success and lack of follow up activities.
INTERPRETATION	Important role in developing scientific understanding for all Wildlife Trust audiences; potential to create memorable image of Wildlife Trusts through clear signs; potential for partnership between conservation and education personnel.	Lack of large-scale investment; inconsistency in quality and management across Trusts; limited by overly busy education staff taking single-handedly taking on interpretation.
PUBLICATIONS*	Use of National Office for Wildlife Trust branded publication to large scale audiences; possibility to use media personalities to help write or promote publications.	Few Trusts engage in this; publication is not a Trust-wide activity; other NGOs do this well (WWF's & environmental education resources).
SCHOOLS ACTIVITIES		
JUNIOR SCHOOLS	Potential for developing sound environmental knowledge with Wildlife Trusts' expertise; schools work can be carried out using Trust centres and reserves and other sites; provision of outdoor experiences for children; possibilities for greater partnership with local authorities, other NGOs and for delivery of LA 21.	Difficulties for NGO engaging in Government-directed National Curriculum work; problems in meeting teachers' needs whilst providing memorable outdoor experiences; schools unable to meet costs of Trusts' assistance; time and resources in preparing curriculum materials.

SCHOOLS GROUND WORK	Development and use of school grounds provides valuable outdoor experiences and effects change; school grounds can be most influential aspect of schooling above subject teaching. Potential to be carried out in partnership.	Cost; others e.g. Groundwork do this well and inter-NGO competition may drain resources needed elsewhere. Grounds work may be restricted by lack of conservation staff involvement.
INSET FOR SCHOOL TEACHERS	Valuable knowledge and skills for teachers who are in influential position; may be more focussed means of delivering environmental curriculum to schools instead of classroom work; enabling use of the 'outdoor classroom'; potential for development through partnerships and/or regional management.	Limited by Trusts' population distribution –easier in built up areas; ad hoc activity among individual Trusts only; lack of sharing best practice.
SECONDARY SCHOOLS	Similar potential as with Junior Schools work; assists young people's development of sound environmental knowledge and necessary for continuity and regular environmental experiences; potential for carrying out in partnership with others. Potential for young people's conferences and decision-making exercises.	Cost in time and resources; not a Trust-wide activity; Trusts do not seek to learn best practice from other Trusts; similar limits that exist for Junior schools activities.
PRE-SCHOOL OR EARLY YEARS	Young children grasp environmental concepts and hold misconceptions as early as 4 years; there are funding opportunities for this work; environmental play and outdoor experiences can start young and be remembered in adulthood; some Trusts practice activities in with this age group and could share with the Wildlife Trust partnership.	Lack of Trust-wide support and practice.
WORK WITH SPECIAL NEEDS CHILDREN	A means of making education inclusive and matching Trusts' philosophy of education for all audiences.	Practised by some Trusts but often for fund-raising for special-needs children; limited by views that this group is not an effective means to further conservation aims; lack of financial reward; Trustees' negative attitudes.
HOLIDAY ACTIVITY SCHEMES*	School children are provided with vacation-time activities; popular; activities can use reserves and Trusts sites; may involve partnership with other organisations or NGOs or regional Trust partnership; potential to be planned alongside other schools activities, fieldwork, Watch clubs and use of centres; good Trust publicity.	Funding; requires regular schemes to be most effective; staff-intensive; health and safety issues; may require accommodation.
FIELDWORK*	Provision of outdoor experiences; can involve families and adults; potential for sharing centres or using other Trusts' centres or camping equipment; could be organised regionally; may form memorable experiences, may be important for local emphasis.	Infrequent; few Trusts participate; limited to Trusts with centres; may require overnight accommodation; lack of whole partnership commitment.

USE OF CENTRES		
VISITOR CENTRES	Potential for creating and developing Wildlife Trusts' public face and image; Visitor centres have multiple uses for different communities and activities; centres could be shared regionally; potential to use centres for volunteers' and members' education.	Centres are not used across partnership; unequal funding among Trusts; lack of National Office support and coordination of best practice; problems with displays; facilities; centres' images; education vs. business tension.
DEMONSTRATION GARDENS & HABITATS	May be portable or established at any site, reserve, Trust offices or other centres; possible for all Trusts to have one; potential to use for promoting other habitats and Trusts; affordable.	Limited by perceived competition if using outside resources or organisation; lack of publicity; lack of staff-wide commitment; unclear management procedures or long term plans.
STUDY CENTRES*	Similar benefits and potential as with visitor centres; useful for wide set of audiences and Trust staff training; classroom facilities will attract schoolchildren and teachers; combine with other centres; can open up reserves to wider public.	Too limited in focus if used as classrooms only; wider audiences need a drop-in facility; limited use if not residential; upkeep may be difficult; lack of long term management.
GARDEN CENTRES*	Potential for wider use with gardening programmes; potential for Trusts' advertisement; appeals to wide non-conservation oriented audience; a springboard for centres-development.	Ad hoc organisation; rarely included in Trusts' community education; reliant on enthusiasm within individual Trusts.
FURTHER EDUCATION/HIGHER EDUCATION		
COLLEGES/ UNIVERSITY	Potential for further use of National Office for student enquiries; Trusts could be involved in env.ed. & countryside management courses; means of promoting WTs; could use reserves more for student courses and fieldwork; potential for increasing student membership and/or creating a student membership package; regional management.	Few Trusts engage in FE/HE connections; personal links and individuals Trusts direct theses activities; limited by Trust locations and student populations; time and staff intensive; may require staff expertise in teaching/lecturing.
STUDENT PLACEMENTS*	Students help with other cons/ed. activities; gaining of potentially memorable experiences that may lead to further WT involvement and/or PED development; potential for building up Information Service which could be funded from outside.	Training students is time intensive; valuable experiences for students may be limited if they are employed in menial or administrative jobs only.
TEACHER TRAINING	Teacher training institutions may welcome assistance; potential advertisement of Wildlife Trusts to large audiences; teachers may call on Trusts when in post; part of long term educational planning; teachers may become important role models for each other and their pupils.	Lack of resources or commitment; more difficult for rural Trusts and smaller Trusts; requires expertise in curriculum; NGO involvement in Govt. education plans may be source of conflict of interests.

WORK WITH YOUNG PEOPLE		
UNIFORM GROUPS	Groups meet regularly therefore may undertake regular experiences outdoors or with Wildlife Trusts; potential for providing means of gaining conservation/nature related badges; publicity and partnerships developed. Young people may be attracted to other Trusts activities.	Lack of personnel; use of one-off experiences only; work is reactive to groups' interest; carried out by minority of Trusts.
YOUTH WORK*	Practical experiences for 'difficult'; audience; opportunities for decision-making and participation; potential to work with existing clubs and work more on reserves; note existing good practice	Lack of funds sought on invested in youth work; not part of Trusts' traditional work; not 'measurable'; may be limited to 'easier' middle-class and existing enthusiasts.
CHILDREN FOR CHANGE	Decision-making and empowerment based work, encourages participation and action; potential for targeting school; National Office assistance and enthusiasm for this project.	Few Trusts involved; Limited to children 9-13, still omits older teenagers; possible Trust fears of National Office domination as with Watch.
OTHER EMPOWERMENT WORK WITH YOUTH PEOPLE*	Means of undertaking LA 21 activities in partnership with others; good examples of conference and empowerment work; seeks to widen participation among young people.	Not operated as a whole partnership activity; relies on enthusiastic individuals; best practice not shared; fears of 'diluting' traditional Trusts strengths.

* Activities carried out by 5 or fewer Trusts

Appendix H A possible two-stage approach for developing Wildlife Trust educational strategy

Stage (1)

A paid education manager identifies a niche for placing a national whole Wildlife Trust partnership strategy for people work into local Trust work, identifying opportunities for local audiences and activities.

It is suggested that, within the first three years of implementing national strategy, at least six audiences and six activities are paired from the lists that follow. Neither list is intended to be exhaustive. Further audiences and activities could be developed over time.

Possible educational activities for local audiences	Possible local audiences
Awareness raising events	Those interested in wildlife
Focus on species / habitat events	Those uninterested
Family events	Those unaware
Wildlife holidays	Special needs groups
Practical conservation on reserves	Special needs schoolchildren
Practical conservation e.g. park or churchyard	Pre-school or nursery children
Seeing wildlife habitats	5-8 year olds
Learning about wildlife and habitats	9-12 year olds
Creating wildlife and habitats	13-16 year olds
Earth education type experiences	16-19 year olds
Experiencing wildlife at night	Youth clubs
Viewing environmental art	Church clubs
Creation of environmental art	Duke of Edinburgh groups
Local planning for wildlife	Rainbows, Beavers
Political lobbying	Brownies, Cubs
Courses for species/habitat knowledge	Scouts, Guides
Observation and recording experiences	Teachers
Magazine subscription	Lecturers
Voluntary work within Trusts	Sixth form students
Walks	University students
Talks and lectures	Ethnic groups
Earning a qualification	Senior citizens
Earning a badge	Volunteers
Learning how to give wildlife experiences	Parents
Visiting a centre	Members
Studying at a centre: day/residential	Other adults
Using environmental literature	Families
Play schemes	Church groups
National Curriculum environmental education	Members of clubs e.g. Women's Institute
Purchasing 'green' goods	Tourists
Wildlife gardening	Service users: National Health, Libraries, Leisure
Reading local/national wildlife news	Businesses
Listening to local/national wildlife news	Farmers
Use of a wildlife information service	Landowners
	Garden centres
	Local council
	MPs

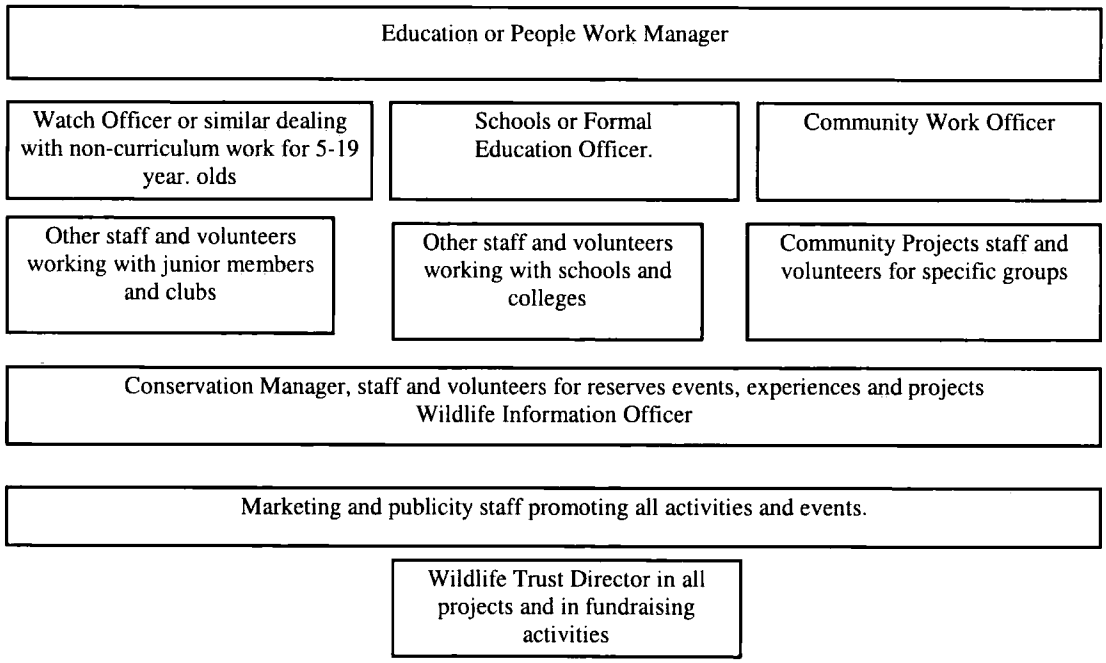
The six audiences could be made up from two age groups of young people, two groups from the local community, one members and one group made up of other adults. Perhaps the six activities could include at least two reserves-based experiences, one event or publicity activity and three others.

An example is shown below whereby the education manager would identify opportunities to engage volunteers or employ staff to develop the following:

Activities	Audiences
Watch style club to include earth education and night time wildlife experiences	5-8 year olds
School curriculum work, based on and around reserves	9-12 year olds
Reserves based event with practical conservation	Parents of above children
Practical conservation and team-building offered in return for sponsorship and publicity for local school children's activities	Local businesses
Green gardening and purchasing	Garden centre users
Wildlife talks / workshops plus involvement in the above where possible	Members

Stage (2)

This illustrates a more mature stage of The Wildlife Trust partnership's educational work and strategy. A greater number of staff within The Wildlife Trusts deals with education, as shown below. All age groups are targeted with various people-work activities, many of which are based around the Trust's reserves and other direct outdoor and wildlife experiences.



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